FIVE BOOKS OF PLOTINUS,

VIZ.

ON FELICITY;

ON THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF EVIL;

ON PROVIDENCE;

ON NATURE, CONTEMPLATION, AND THE ONE;

AND ON THE DESCENT OF THE SOUL:

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION,

CONTAINING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THESE IMPORTANT SUBJECTS.

BY THOMAS TAYLOR.

If intellect has the same proportion to that which is intelligible (or the proper object of intellect) as sense to that which is sensible; and if intellect is better than sense, then that which is intelligible will be better than that which is sensible. Hence, this being admitted, the objects of intellectual vision cannot be derived from objects of sense, because they would thus be subordinate and not superior to sensibles.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following five books, which are on the moſt intereſting ſubjects, may likewiſe be conſidered as forming one of the moſt important parts of the works of the celebrated Plotinus. Of this extraordinary man, who, on account of the profundity and elevation of his mind, was juſtly denominated, by the Platonic philoſophers that ſucceeded him, *the great*, I have given the life, in the ſecond volume of my tranſlation of Proclus on Euclid, and which it would conſequently be ſuperfluous at preſent to repeat. I ſhall, therefore, only now add concerning him, in addition to what I have there delivered, that however divinely ſome

of the moſt important dogmas of the Platonic philoſophy were unfolded by him, yet many others were more perfectly diſcuſſed by ſucceeding Platoniſts, and particularly by Proclus, the Coryphæus of all genuine philoſophers.

As in the following tranſlation therefore I have endeavoured to render the profound meaning of Plotinus obvious to ſuch as have been benefited by any of my former publications, and for whom alone the preſent work is deſigned, I ſhall preſent the reader with ſuch additional information on the ſubjects which are here diſcuſſed, as I have obtained by a diligent ſtudy of Proclus and Olympiodorus, thoſe two great luminaries of philoſophy poſterior to Plotinus, and by

whom the doctrines of the ancients ſeem to have been interpreted in the greateſt perfection poſſible to man.

I. In the firſt place, then, I ſhall obſerve, concerning FELICITY, that *every being is then happy when it acquires the proper perfection of its nature*; and conſequently all vital beings are capable of receiving felicity that are capable of arriving at the perfection of their nature. Hence, as the *nature* or *being* of every thing conſiſts in that part of the thing which is moſt excellent; for that which is moſt excellent is moſt principal, and nothing can have a more principal ſubſiſtence than being—as this is the caſe, human felicity conſiſts in a perfect intellectual energy; for intellect is our principal part. Hence

too, as the form of life is different in different beings, the perfection likewiſe of each will be limited by different meaſures. The firſt form therefore of felicity, and which is at the ſame time all-perfect, is that of the univerſe. The ſecond is that of the mundane gods, whom Plato in the Phædrus calls *bleſſed* gods, and repreſents following the mighty Jupiter. The third form of felicity is that which ſubſiſts in the genera ſuperior to the human nature; for the virtue of angels is different from that of dæmons, and this laſt from that of heroes. The fourth ſubſiſts in thoſe unpolluted ſouls, ſuch as Hercules, Theſeus, Pythagoras, Plato, &c., who deſcend into generation without being contaminated with its defilements, and who preſerve an untamed

and undeviating life. The fifth form of felicity ſubſiſts in gregarious and multiform ſouls, ſuch as thoſe of the bulk of mankind: and the laſt takes place in irrational animals.

In the next place, obſerve, that though the human ſoul may in this life partake of true felicity, by converting itſelf wholly to intellect, yet it can then only be uninterruptedly bleſſed, when it aſcends with its etherial vehicle perfectly pure to the pure ſpheres, or to the more ſublime air or æther; for then, on account of the proſperous condition of the body with which it is connected, and the place in which that body ſubſiſts, it is by no means hindered in the energies of divine contemplation. As the power

and amplitude too, of the more elevated are greater than the inferior ſpheres, and as the virtue of the ſoul in the former is more excellent than in the latter, by how much the one ſurpaſſes the other, by ſo much longer will the ſoul live in the ſuperior than in the ſubordinate ſpheres. Beſides, by how much more powerful intellect, which is elevated to ſupernal natures, is than the imagination which verges to ſenſibles, by ſo much longer is the life of the rational ſoul, when converted to the luminous viſions of intellect, than when bound as it were to the dark and figured eye of the phantaſy, and beholding nothing but the ever-flowing and fallacious objects of ſenſe. Laſtly, thoſe ſouls live for a ſhorter time on the earth, and for a

longer time in the celeſtial ſpheres, who, from poſſeſſing prerogatives ſuperior to thoſe of the herd of mankind, originally belong to more excellent ſtars, and to dæmons of a more exalted rank.

I only add farther, concerning this book ON FELICITY, that when Plotinus aſſerts in it, that we poſſeſs an intellect perpetually vigilant and in energy, without experiencing any remiſſion, it is in conſequence of his believing that the whole of the rational ſoul does not deſcend into body, but that its ſupreme part, intellect, always abides in the intelligible world. This opinion he mentions explicitly at the end of his book *On the Deſcent of the Soul*; but againſt this opinion Proclus very juſtly objects,

that if our intellect thus remains in the intelligible world, it either perpetually underſtands without tranſition, or tranſitively: but if without tranſition, it will be intellect alone, and not a part of the ſoul; and if tranſitively, that which is perpetually, and that which is ſometimes intelligent, will form one eſſence. To which we may add (ſays he) the abſurdity reſulting from ſuppoſing that the ſummit of the ſoul is perpetually perfect, and yet does not rule over the other powers and give them perfection. The fact is, indeed, that our intellect, though it ſubſiſts in energy, has a remitted union with things themſelves, and though it energizes from itſelf, and contains intelligibles in its eſſence, yet, from its alliance to the diſcurſive nature

of ſoul, and its inclination to that which is diviſible, it falls ſhort of the perfection of an intellectual eſſence and energy profoundly indiviſible and united, and the intelligibles which it contains degenerate from the tranſcendantly fulgid, and ſelf-luminous nature of firſt intelligibles. Hence, in obtaining a perfectly indiviſible knowledge, it requires to be perfected by an intellect whoſe energy is ever vigilant and unremitted, and its intelligibles, that they may become perfect, are indigent of the light which proceeds from ſeparate intelligibles. Ariſtotle, therefore, very properly compares the intelligibles of our intellect to colours, becauſe theſe require the ſplendor of the ſun; and denominates an intellect of this kind, *intellect in capacity*, both on

account of its ſubordination to an eſſential intellect, and becauſe it is from a ſeparate intellect that it receives the full perfection of its nature.

II. With reſpect to the ſecond book, which treats *of the Origin and Nature of Evil*, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that from the intricacy of the ſubject, ſome of the ancients were induced to believe that evil has no kind of exiſtence whatever; others, who admitted its exiſtence, aſſerted at the ſame time, that there was no ſuch thing as providence; and others, who acknowledged a providence, believed in conſequence of this, that all things are good: for if divinity was willing that evil ſhould exiſt, how can he be good? ſince every thing which is

eſſentially good benefits all things, in the ſame manner as that which is eſſentially hot imparts heat; but it is not lawful for that which is good to produce any thing elſe than good. But if divinity was not willing that evil ſhould exiſt, how is it poſſible that it can have a ſubſiſtence? For if this were admitted, ſomething would exiſt contrary to the will of the father of all things. In anſwer to this doubt, it muſt be obſerved, that the habitude or relation which divinity has to things differs from that of ours; and again, things are related to divinity in a manner different from what they are to us; for there is one kind of relation of wholes to parts, and another of parts towards each other. With reference to divinity, therefore, nothing is

The relation of wholes to parts is that of producing preserving & perfecting but of parts to wholes that of being produced preserved & perfected.

evil, not even among things which are called evils; for theſe he employs to beneficent purpoſes. But, on the other hand, with reſpect to partial natures, there is a certain evil with which they are naturally connected, and the ſame thing is evil to a part, but to the univerſe, and to wholes, good; for ſo far as a thing has being, and ſo far as it participates of order, it is good.

To be convinced, however, that there is no ſuch thing as perfect evil, it will be neceſſary to make the following diviſion: of all things in the univerſe, ſome are wholes, *i. e.* natures which participate of one perfect form; and others are parts. And of parts ſome externally preſerve their own good, ſuch as partial

intellects and partial dæmons, but others are not always able to preſerve it; and of theſe, ſome are moved by other natures, but others are ſelf-motive. And of the ſelf-motive natures, ſome poſſeſs evil eſtabliſhed in the will, but others extend it to action. But as to wholes, they are entirely good, not only ſupplying themſelves, but likewiſe parts, with good. And as to ſuch things as are parts, but preſerve their proper good, theſe poſſeſs good ſecondarily and partially; but parts which are moved by others, and derive their ſubſiſtence from others, are likewiſe ſuſpended from the providence of the natures through which they ſubſiſt, and are tranſmuted by them in a becoming manner: and this is the caſe with ſuch bodies as are generated

Such as man

Soul ſelfmotive

and corrupted; for if it is neceſſary that there ſhould be generation, it is likewiſe neceſſary that there ſhould be corruption, ſince generation ſubſiſts according to mutation, and is itſelf a certain mutation; but if there is corruption, it is alſo neceſſary that the unnatural ſhould be introduced among things. As therefore that which is corrupted is indeed corrupted with reſpect to itſelf, but is not deſtroyed with reſpect to the univerſe, for it becomes either air or water, or ſome one of the other things into which it is changed, in like manner that which is contrary to nature is diſordered with reſpect to itſelf, but is orderly and regular with reſpect to the univerſe. But as to ſuch natures as are partial, but ſelf-motive, and which, energizing acccording to ex-

ternals, cauſe evil to take place with reſpect to themſelves, this is alſo good in a certain reſpect with reference to divinity; for though the action ariſing from a depraved will is not ſimply good, yet it is good ſo far as it partakes of divine juſtice, and is indeed beneficial to this or that particular life: for of goods, ſome ſubſiſt as good to all things, others as good to things which differ according to ſpecies, and others as good to individuals conſidered as individuals. Thus, for inſtance, hellebore is neither good to all things nor yet to all bodies, nor to all bodies that are diſeaſed, but to a body with a particular diſeaſe, and is from a certain principle conducive to health. Every intemperate and unjuſt action therefore is good to thoſe by whom it is

committed, ſo far as it is attended with puniſhment from divine juſtice: for again, of goods, ſome are precedaneous and others preparative; and the precedaneous are ſuch as are deſirable for their own ſakes, but the preparative, for the ſake of other things. The puniſhment therefore which is inflicted by divinity on evil actions is a preparative good; for the deſign of divinity in puniſhing is to purify the ſoul and properly diſpoſe it for the reception of the higheſt good. Hence unjuſt actions, by being attended with puniſhment, become the means of good to the offending ſoul, but ſimply conſidered, are very remote from the nature of good.

In ſhort, there is no evil which is not

in a certain reſpect good, becauſe the beneficent illuminations of providence extend to all things, and even irradiate the dark and formleſs nature of matter. But if any one ſhould aſk, whether divinity was willing that there ſhould be evil, or was unwilling? We reply, that he was both willing and unwilling: for conſidered as imparting being to all things, he was willing; for every thing in the univerſe, which has in any reſpect being, proceeds from a demiurgic cauſe. But he was not willing, conſidered as producing all things good; for he concealed evil in the utility of good. Evil, therefore, neither ſubſiſts in intellectual natures, for the whole intellectual order is void of evil, nor in *whole* ſouls, or *whole* bodies, for all *wholes* are free from

evil, on account of their perpetually ſubſiſting according to nature. Hence evil muſt either ſubſiſt in partial ſouls or partial bodies, but yet not in the eſſences of theſe, becauſe all their eſſences are of divine origin; nor in their powers, for theſe ſubſiſt according to nature. It remains, therefore, that evil muſt ſubſiſt in their energies. But among ſouls, it cannot be in the energies of ſuch as are rational, for all theſe aſpire after good; nor in the energies of ſuch as are irrational, for theſe energize according to nature; but it muſt take place *in the privation of ſymmetry between the two.* And, with reſpect to bodies, evil can neither ſubſiſt in their form, for it deſires to rule over matter; nor in matter, for it aſpires after the ſupervening irradia-

tions of form; but *in the aſymmetry of form with reſpect to matter*. And from hence it is evident that every thing evil is according to a *parypoſtaſis, i. e.* has a ſhadowy kind of being; that at the ſame time it is coloured by good; that conſequently all things are good through the will of divinity; and that even evil is neceſſary to the perfection of the univerſe, as without its ſhadowy nature generation could not ſubſiſt.

From all that has been ſaid, therefore, we muſt conclude, in oppoſition to Plotinus, that matter is not the firſt evil, and evil itſelf; for matter is the offspring of deity, and conſequently muſt be, in a certain reſpect, good. Matter, indeed, is the firſt indefinite, and is neither good

nor evil, but a thing neceſſary to the univerſe, and the moſt diſtant of all things from *the good itſelf*. Nor is the ſoul's debility owing to her lapſe into matter; for as this lapſe is voluntary, the ſoul muſt have ſinned prior to her deſcent.

III. We now come, in the third place, to the book *On Providence*, in which the reader will find many admirable dogmas worthy the profound and elevated genius of Plotinus. The following additional information on this moſt intereſting ſubject, from the adytum of philoſophy, will, I doubt not, be gratefully received by the Platonic reader.

Certain philoſophers poſterior to Plato,

on ſeeing the unſtable condition of ſublunary things, were fearful that they were not under the direction of providence and a divine nature; for ſuch events as are ſaid to take place through fortune, the apparent inequality reſpecting lives, and the diſordered motion of material natures, induced them greatly to ſuſpect that they were not under the government of providence: beſides, the perſuaſion that divinity is not buſily employed in the evolution of all-various reaſons, and that he does not depart from his own bleſſedneſs, induced them to frame an hypotheſis ſo lawleſs and dire. For they were of opinion that the paſſion of our ſoul, and the perturbation which it ſuſtains by deſcending to the government of bodies, muſt happen to

divinity if he converted himself to the providential inspection of things. Farther still, from considering that different objects of knowledge were known by different gnostic powers; as, for instance, sensibles by sense, doxastics * by opinion, things scientific by science, and intelligibles by intellect, and at the same time neither placing sense, nor opinion, nor science in divinity, but only an intellect immaterial and pure; — hence they asserted that divinity had no knowledge of any other things than the objects of intellect †: for, say they, if matter is external to him, it is necessary that he should be pure from apprehensions which

* *i. e.* Objects of opinion.

† This opinion was embraced by the more early Peripatetics.

are converted to matter; but being purified from theſe, it follows that he muſt have no knowledge of material natures: and hence the patrons of this doctrine deprived him of a knowledge of, and providential exertions about, ſenſibles, not through any imbecility of nature, but through a tranſcendancy of gnoſtic energy; juſt as thoſe whoſe eyes are filled with light are ſaid to be incapable of perceiving mundane objects, at the ſame time that this incapacity is nothing more than tranſcendancy of viſion. They likewiſe add, that there are many things which it is beautiful not to know. Thus to the entheaſtic (or ſuch as are agitated by a divine fury) it is beautiful to be ignorant of whatever would deſtroy the deific energy; and to the ſcientific not

to know that which would defile the intuitive perception of ſcience.

But other philoſophers aſcribe, indeed, to divinity a knowledge of ſenſibles, in order that they may not take away his providence, but at the ſame time convert his apprehenſion to that which is external, repreſent him as pervading through the whole of a ſenſible nature, as paſſing into contact with the objects of his government, impelling every thing, and being locally preſent with all things; for (ſay they) he would not otherwiſe be able to exert a providential energy in a becoming manner, and impart good to every thing according to its deſert *.

* This was the opinion of the Stoics.

Others again affirm that divinity has a knowledge of himſelf, but that he has no occaſion to underſtand ſenſibles in order to provide for them, but that by his very eſſence he produced all things, and adorns whatever he has produced, without having any knowledge of his productions. They add, that this is by no means wonderful, ſince nature operates without knowledge in an unphantaſtic manner; but that divinity differs from nature in this, that he has a knowledge of himſelf, though not of the things which are fabricated by him. And ſuch are the aſſertions of thoſe who were perſuaded that divinity is not ſeparated from mundane natures, and of thoſe who deprived him of the knowledge of inferior concerns, and of a

knowledge operating in union with providence.

With reſpect to theſe philoſophers, we aſſert, that they ſpeak truly, and yet not truly, on this ſubject: for if providence has a ſubſiſtence, neither can there be any thing diſordered, nor can divinity be buſily employed, nor can he know ſenſibles, through paſſive ſenſe; but theſe philoſophers, in conſequence of not knowing the exempt power and uniform knowledge of the gods, appear to deviate from the truth. For thus we interrogate them: Does not every thing energize in a becoming manner when it energizes according to its own power and nature? as, for inſtance, does not nature, in conformity to the order of its

essence, energize naturally, intellect intellectually, and soul animastiçally? And when the same thing is generated by many and different causes, does not each of these produce according to its own power, and not according to the nature of the thing produced? Or shall we say that each produces after the same manner, and that, for example, the sun and man generate man according to the same mode of operation, and not according to the natural ability of each, viz. the one, partially, imperfectly, and with a busy energy, but the other without anxious attention, by its very essence, and totally? But to assert this would be absurd; for a divine operates in a manner very different from a mortal nature.

If, therefore, every thing which energizes, energizes according to its own nature and order, ſome things divinely and ſupernaturally, others naturally, and others in a different manner, it is evident that every gnoſtic being knows, according to its own nature, and that it does not follow that becauſe the thing known is one and the ſame, on this account the natures which know, energize in conformity to the eſſence of the things known. Thus ſenſe, opinion, and our intellect, know that which is white, but not in the ſame manner: for ſenſe cannot know what the eſſence is of a thing white, nor can opinion obtain a knowledge of its proper objects in the ſame manner as intellect; for opinion knows only *that* a thing is, but intellect knows

the cauſe of its exiſtence. Knowledge therefore ſubſiſts according to the nature of that which knows, and not according to the nature of that which is known. What wonder is it therefore that divinity ſhould know all things in ſuch a manner as is accommodated to his nature, viz. diviſible things, indiviſibly, things multiplied, uniformly, things generated, according to an eternal intelligence, totally, ſuch things as are partial; and that, with a knowledge of this kind, he ſhould poſſeſs a power productive of all things, or, in other words, that by knowing all things with ſimple and united intellections, he ſhould impart to every thing being, and a progreſſion into being? For the auditory ſenſe knows audibles in a manner different from the

Solution. Boethius

common ſenſe; and prior to, and different from theſe, reaſon knows audibles, together with other particulars which ſenſe is not able to apprehend. And again, of deſire, which tends to one thing, of anger, which aſpires after another thing, and of *proaireſis*, (προαιρεσις), or that faculty of the ſoul which is a deliberative tendency to things in our power, there is one particular life moving the ſoul towards all theſe, which are mutually motive of each other. It is through this life that we ſay, I deſire, I am angry, and I have a deliberative tendency to this thing or that; for this life verges to all theſe powers, and lives in conjunction with them, as being a power which is impelled to every object of deſire. But prior both to reaſon, and this

one life, is *the one* of the ſoul, which often ſays, I perceive, I reaſon, I deſire, and I deliberate, which follows all theſe energies, and energizes together with them; for we ſhould not be able to know all theſe, and to apprehend in what they differ from each other, unleſs we contained a certain indiviſible nature, which has a ſubſiſtence above the common ſenſe, and which, prior to opinion, deſire, and will, knows all that theſe know and deſire, according to an indiviſible mode of apprehenſion.

If this be the caſe, it is by no means proper to diſbelieve in the indiviſible knowledge of divinity, which knows ſenſibles without poſſeſſing ſenſe, and diviſible natures without poſſeſſing a di-

viſible energy, and which, without being preſent to things in place, knows them prior to all local preſence, and imparts to every thing that which every thing is capable of receiving. The unſtable eſſence therefore of apparent natures, is not known by him in an unſtable, but in a definite manner; nor does he know that which is ſubject to all-various mutations dubiouſly, but in a manner perpetually the ſame; for by knowing himſelf, he knows every thing of which he is the cauſe, poſſeſſing a knowledge tranſcendantly more accurate than that which is co-ordinate to the objects of knowledge; ſince a cauſal knowledge of every thing is ſuperior to every other kind of knowledge. Divinity therefore knows without buſily attending to the

objects of his intellection, becauſe he abides in himſelf, and by alone knowing himſelf, knows all things. Nor is he indigent of ſenſe, or opinion, or ſcience, in order to know ſenſible natures; for it is himſelf that produces all theſe, and that, in the unfathomable depths of the intellection of himſelf, comprehends an united knowledge of them, according to cauſe, and in one ſimplicity of perception: juſt as if ſome one having built a ſhip, ſhould place in it men of his own formation, and, in conſequence, of poſſeſſing a various art, ſhould add a ſea to the ſhip, produce certain winds, and afterwards launch the ſhip into the new-created main. Let us ſuppoſe too, that he cauſes theſe to have an exiſtence by merely conceiving them to exiſt, ſo

that by imagining all this to take place, he gives an external ſubſiſtence to his inward phantaſms, it is evident that, in this caſe, he will contain the cauſe of every thing which happens to the ſhip through the winds on the ſea, and that by contemplating his own conceptions, without being indigent of outward converſion, he will, at the ſame time, both fabricate and know theſe external particulars. Thus, and in a ſtill greater degree, that divine intellect, the artificer of the univerſe, poſſeſſing the cauſes of all things, both gives ſubſiſtence to, and contemplates, whatever the univerſe contains, without departing from the ſpeculation of himſelf. But if, with reſpect to intellect, one kind is more partial, and another more total, it is evident

that there is not the ſame intellectual perfection of all things, but that where intelligibles have a more total and undiſtributed ſubſiſtence, there the knowledge is more total and indiviſible, and where the number of forms proceeds into multitude and extenſion, there the knowledge is both one and multiform. Hence, this being admitted, we cannot wonder on hearing the Orphic verſes, in which the theologiſt ſays,

Αυτη δε ζηνος κ̣ εν ομμασι πατρος ανακτος
Ναιουσ' αθανατοι τε θεοι, θνητοι τ' ανθρωποι,
Οσσα τε ην γαγαωσα, κ̣ υστερον οσσα εμελλεν.

i. e.

There, in the ſight of Jove, the parent king,
Th' immortal gods and mortal men reſide,
With all that ever was, and ſhall hereafter be.

For the artificer of the univerſe is full of

all intelligibles, and the cauſes of all things ſubſiſt in him diſtinctly, and intellectually ſeparated from each other.

In the next place, it is neceſſary to know that providence, as the name implies, is *an energy prior to intellect*, and conſequently, from its tranſcending all intellectual and ſenſible natures, is ſuperior to fate, which is a beneficent exertion of the gods, reſulting from, and ſubſiſting in, bodies. Hence, whatever is under the dominion of fate, is likewiſe under the dominion of providence, deriving its connection from fate, but the good which it poſſeſſes from providence; but, on the contrary, all things which are under the government of providence are not indigent of fate; for in-

So, the wise man who intirely gives himself up to the illumination of Providence is superior to fate.

Fatum sub Pedibus dedit superbum — Boetius.

Tramples proud fate under his feet.

tellectual beings are exempt from its dominion. As there are two genera of things therefore, the one intellectual and the other ſenſible, ſo there are two kingdoms of theſe, viz. one of providence, which comprehends intellectual and ſenſible natures, and the other of fate, which rules over ſenſibles alone. And providence differs from fate, in the ſame manner as a god differs from that which is divine indeed, but which is ſo by participation, and not according to a primary ſubſiſtence. Juſt as with reſpect to light, that which ſubſiſts in the ſun is primary, but that which is in the air ſecondary: and life is primarily in the ſoul, but ſecondarily in the body. Providence therefore is a god eſſentially, but fate is ſomething divine, and not a

A wise man may truly say "my kingdom is not of this world."

god, for it depends on providence, and has the ſame relation to it as an image to its exemplar.

Should it be aſked whether providence extends itſelf to all things, to wholes and parts, to eternal and corruptible natures, we reply, that even the moſt minute particulars depend on the beneficent providence of the artificer of the univerſe; for nothing can eſcape its all-comprehending power, whether you regard the eſſence of a thing, or its ſubſiſtence as an object of knowledge. It is ſaid, indeed, and with great propriety, that the whole circle has a central ſubſiſtence in the centre, ſince the centre is the cauſe, but the circle the thing cauſed; and on the ſame account every

number ſubſiſts monadically in unity. But in *the one* of providence, all things are contained in a much more exalted manner, ſince it is far more tranſcendantly one than a centre, and an arithmetical monad.

Hence, nothing but the inaptitude of our nature can reſiſt the all-pervading power of providence: and, indeed, even in this caſe, providence is not hindered either in its knowledge or beneficent care of our concerns; but as thoſe who are aſleep, or who ſhut their eyes, enjoy indeed that heat of the ſun which is imparted to terreſtrial natures, but deprive themſelves of his illuminative power, and this through their own free will, and not through the god angrily

withdrawing from them his rays; in like manner thoſe who, through a certain depravity, are ſaid to be deprived of the providence of the gods, are not entirely beyond the reach of its influence. For, as the Athenian gueſt in Plato well obſerves, there is not any thing ſo ſmall, that by deſcending into the profundities of the earth it can eſcape the inſpection of providence, which beholds all things, and even ſuch as are the leaſt; nor is there any thing ſo great that it can paſs beyond the heavens, and by this means be ſituated out of the dominions of that providence which governs the univerſality of things. Guilty ſouls, therefore, while they deprive themſelves of thoſe powers of the gods which impart to us every kind of good, neceſſarily become

expoſed to that puniſhment which divinity benevolently inflicts, in order to bring them from a condition contrary, to one conformable to nature.

Hence too, ſince the knowledge of the gods is tranſcendantly more excellent than the nature of the things known, they muſt know things paſt, preſent, and to come, by one bounded and immutable knowledge, and conſequently muſt have a definite apprehenſion of whatever is contingent. For the knowledge of the gods does not keep pace with the ever-flowing nature of things in generation; nor is there any thing of paſt or future in the ineffable unity of their perception, but all things ſubſiſt in them, according to an ever-abiding

now, which is prior to all temporal repreſentation, and ſignifies their firm and immutable nature.

Should it be urged, that the ambiguous anſwers which the ancient oracles gave reſpecting future events prove that the gods have no definite knowledge of things contingent, we reply, with the great Syrianus, that the knowledge and intelligence of the gods is very different from the energy of the propheteſs, who is, indeed, moved by the gods, but generates in herſelf diviſible diſcourſe, poetic meaſures, and ambiguous knowledge: for the nature of that which is illuminated is not ſuch as that which illumines. Beſides, oracles were often delivered in ambiguous terms, with a

view to the advantage of thoſe that heard them, viz. in order to exerciſe their cogitative powers; for the gods make uſe of us as ſelf-motive natures, as ſuch govern all our actions, and diſtribute all things to us according to our deſerts.

Again, ſhould any one aſk why puniſhments do not immediately follow the perpetration of crimes, but are inflicted afterwards, and ſometimes not till long after the accompliſhment of guilt, we reply, that the ingrafted root of wickedneſs, like land which produces thorns, (for though the produce of ſuch ground is cut down a thouſand times, yet it is always productive of the like) renders the ſame operations without being mol-

lified by puniſhment. Providence, therefore, waits the arrival of that period, which it knows will be profitable to the cure of ſouls: to which we may add, that haſty anger is not a good diſpenſator of puniſhments. Plato, being about to ſcourge one of his ſervants, was ſeen for ſome time holding the whip in an elevated poſition, and when aſked the reaſon of his ſtanding in that manner, replied, that he was puniſhing his overhaſty anger. Archytas ſaid to his ſervants in a field, who had diſobeyed his orders, and were expecting to be puniſhed for their neglect, it is well for you that I am angry. Theano likewiſe ſaid to her ſervant, if I were not angry I ſhould chaſtiſe you. It was a law among the Egyptians, that a pregnant

woman, who was condemned to die, ſhould not be put to death till ſhe was delivered: what wonder is it, therefore, that providence ſhould preſerve thoſe that are worthy of death, but at the ſame time able to accompliſh illuſtrious actions, till they have accompliſhed them? If Themiſtocles had immediately ſuffered the puniſhment which his conduct deſerved, when a young man, who would have freed Athens from the Perſian evils? Who would have expounded the Pythian oracle? If Dionyſius had periſhed in the beginning of his tyranny, who would have freed Sicily from the Chalcedonians? If Periander had been puniſhed in a ſhort ſpace of time, who would have freed Apollonia, the pleaſant iſland of the Leucadians, and Anac-

torium, from the machinations of their enemies? To which we may add, that though the time of deferred puniſhment appears long to us, yet to the eye of providence it is nothing; as, on the other hand, the place in which we at preſent reſide is perfectly ſmall with reſpect to the puniſhment of great offences, but in the infernal regions there are many and indiſcribable places of puniſhment, and an innumerable multitude of torments, accommodated to the guilt of the ſouls that reſide there.

Beſides, ſuch is the magnitude of neceſſary puniſhment, that the whole of it does not take place at once. But remorſe is naturally implanted in offending ſouls. For they ſay, that the tyrant

Apollodorus ſaw himſelf in a dream ſcourged and boiled by certain perſons, and heard his heart crying aloud from the kettle, *I am the cauſe of theſe thy torments.* It is reported too, of Ptolemy, who was called *thunder*, that certain of his friends dreamt he was called to the judgement ſeat by Seleucus, and that vultures and wolves ſat as his judges. And ſuch are the preludes of deſtined puniſhment, which are inherent in guilty ſouls.

Again, ſhould it be aſked, why certain children are puniſhed for the crimes of their parents, (which the Pythian oracle ſaid was the caſe with the poſterity of Pelops, and which Proclus informs us the myſteries evinced,) and why cities

are puniſhed for the ſins of individuals, we reply, that the equity of divine vengeance in this particular will become immediately apparent, if we direct our attention to the pre-exiſtence of human ſouls, and conſider that many are puniſhed in the preſent, for offences which they have committed in a former life; and that thoſe whoſe guilt is of a ſimilar kind, are, by the wiſe adminiſtration of providence, brought together, ſo as to form one family, or one city, and thus are as much collectively the object of puniſhment as an offending individual.

Laſtly, ſhould it be inquired, ſince the providence of divinity knows all things and reduces them to good, how angels, dæmons, heroes, and undefiled ſouls

govern the world in conjunction with the gods, we reply, that the providence of the gods is univerſal and total, but that of their attendants partial, ſubordinate, and limited.

IV. In the next place follows the book *On Nature, Contemplation, and the One*, which abounds with divine conceptions, and contains ſome of the moſt arcane doctrines of the Platonic philoſophy. I ſhall only obſerve concerning nature, in addition to what is here delivered, that it ſubſiſts between ſoul and corporeal powers; for a medium of this kind is neceſſary, in order to connect ſoul, which has a ſelf-motive eſſence, with body, which is entirely alter-motive, or moved by another.

Hence, it is inferior to ſoul, through its being divided about bodies, and its incapacity of converſion to itſelf, but it ſurpaſſes corporeal powers through containing the reaſons of all things, and generating and vivifying every part of the viſible world: for nature verges towards bodies, and is inſeparable from their fluctuating empire; but ſoul (viz. the ſoul of the world) is ſeparate from body, is eſtabliſhed in herſelf, and ſubſiſts both from herſelf and another; from another, that is, from intellect, through participation, and from herſelf on account of her not verging to body, but abiding in her own eſſence, and at the ſame time illuminating the obſcure nature of matter with a ſecondary life. Nature, therefore, is the laſt of the

cauſes which fabricate this corporeal and ſenſible world, bounds the progreſſions of incorporeal eſſences, and is full of reaſons and powers through which ſhe governs mundane affairs. And ſhe is a goddeſs conſidered as deified, but not according to the primary ſignification of the word; for ſhe has not a ſupereſſential ſubſiſtence. But ſhe governs the whole world by her powers, by her ſummit comprehending the heavens, but through theſe ruling over the fluctuating empire of generation, and every where weaving together partial natures in amicable conjunction with wholes. In ſhort, nature is the one life of the world, through which, as a root, all bodies, celeſtial and ſublunary, wholes and parts, bloſſom into exiſtence. This life

too is productive of ſeeds, and is the cauſe to all bodies of generation, nutrition, and increaſe: but this life is void of phantaſy, as is evident from its ſubſiſtence in our bodies; for it is diſtributed through every part of theſe, and becomes by this means paſſive in the higheſt degree, whereas the phantaſy, which is the ſummit of the irrational life, is undiſtributed and impaſſive.

V. We come now to the laſt of theſe books of Plotinus, which the Platonic reader will find to be in every reſpect worthy the uncommonly profound and divine genius of Plotinus. In addition, therefore, to what he has ſo admirably delivered on this important ſubject, *the Deſcent of the Soul*, I ſhall, in the firſt

place, offer a few arguments in defence of the ſoul's pre-exiſtence, which is neceſſarily included in the doctrine of its deſcent. Unleſs the ſoul, then, had a being prior to her connection with the preſent body, ſhe never would be led to ſearch after knowledge; for if the objects of her inveſtigation were things which ſhe had never before been acquainted with, how could ſhe ever be certain that ſhe detected them? Indeed, it would be as impoſſible on this hypotheſis for the ſoul to know any thing about them, even when ſhe perceived them, as it would be to tell the meaning of the words of an unknown language on hearing them pronounced. The Peripatetics, in order to ſubvert this conſequence, have recourſe to an intellect

in capacity, which is the paſſive recipient of all forms: but the doubt ſtill remains; for how does this intellect underſtand? For it muſt either underſtand the things which it already knows, or things which it does not know. But the Stoics aſſert, that natural conceptions are the cauſes of our inveſtigating and diſcovering truth. If, therefore, theſe conceptions are in capacity, we aſk the ſame queſtion as before; but if they are in energy, why do we inveſtigate things which we know? But the Epicureans affirm that anticipations are the cauſes of our inveſtigations. If then they ſay that theſe anticipations ſubſiſt articulately, inveſtigation muſt be vain; but if inarticulately, why do we ſeek after any thing beſides theſe anticipations; or, in other

words, why do we ſeek after diſtinct knowledge, of which we have no anticipation?

Again, there are numberleſs inſtances of perſons that are terrified at certain animals, ſuch as cats, lizards, and tortoiſes, without knowing the cauſe of their terror. The nephews of Berius, (ſays Olympiodorus *) that were accuſtomed to hunt bears and lions, could not endure the ſight of a cock. The ſame author adds, that a certain apothecary could look undiſturbed at aſps and dragons, but was ſo vehemently frightened at a waſp, that he would run from it crying aloud, and quite ſtupified with

* MS. Comment. in Phædonem.

terror. Thus too (ſays he) Themiſon, the phyſician, could apply himſelf to the cure of every diſeaſe except the hydrophobia; but if any perſon only mentioned this diſeaſe, he would be immediately agitated, and ſuffer in a manner ſimilar to thoſe afflicted with this malady. Now it is impoſſible to aſſign any other ſatisfactory cauſe of all this, than a reminiſcence of having ſuffered through theſe animals in a prior ſtate of exiſtence.

Farther ſtill, infants are not ſeen to laugh for nearly three weeks after their birth, but paſs the greateſt part of this time in ſleep; however, in their ſleep they are often ſeen both to laugh and cry. But how is it poſſible that this can any otherwiſe happen than through the

ſoul being agitated by the whirling motions of the animal nature, and moved in conformity to the paſſions which it had experienced in another life? Beſides, our looking into ourſelves when we are endeavouring to diſcover any truth, evinces that we inwardly contain truth, though concealed in the darkneſs of oblivion. The delight too which attends our diſcovery of truth, ſufficiently proves that this diſcovery is nothing more than a recognition of ſomething moſt eminently allied to our nature, and which had been, as it were, loſt in the middle ſpace of time between our former knowledge of the truth and the recovery of that knowledge: for the perception of a thing perfectly unknown and unconnected with our nature, would produce

terror inſtead of delight; and things are pleaſing only in proportion as they poſſeſs ſomething known and domeſtic to the natures by which they are known.

In the next place, I ſhall preſent the reader with the following remarkable account of the manner in which the ſoul deſcends, from the elegant Ariſtides, (De Muſica, p. 103, &c.) who ſays, that this account is ancient, and was delivered by men celebrated for their wiſdom.

"The ſoul, as long as ſhe is ſeated "in a purer place of the univerſe, in "conſequence of not being mingled "with the nature of bodies, is pure and "inviolate, and revolves, together with

" the ruler of the world; but when,
" through an inclination to theſe inferior
" concerns, ſhe receives certain phan-
" taſms from places about the earth,
" then ſhe gradually imbibes oblivion
" of the goods ſhe poſſeſſed in her for-
" mer ſuperior ſtation, and at the ſame
" time deſcends. But by how much
" the more ſhe is removed from ſupe-
" rior natures, by ſo much the more
" approaching to inferiors, is ſhe filled
" with inſanity, and hurled into corpo-
" real darkneſs; becauſe, through a di-
" minution of her former dignity, ſhe
" can no longer be intelligibly extended
" with the univerſe: but on account of
" her oblivion of ſupernal goods, and
" conſequent aſtoniſhment, ſhe is borne
" downwards into more ſolid natures,

" and ſuch as are involved in the ob-
" ſcurity of matter. Hence, when her
" deſire of body commences, ſhe aſ-
" ſumes and draws from each of the ſu-
" perior places ſome portions of corpo-
" real mixture. As ſhe paſſes, there-
" fore, through the ethereal orbs, ſhe
" receives whatever is luciform and ac-
" commodated to heating, and natu-
" rally connecting the body; involving
" herſelf, through an inordinate direc-
" tion, in certain bonds from theſe cir-
" cles, and the mutual motions of their
" lines, after the manner of a net. But
" when ſhe is carried through places
" about the moon, which poſſeſs a com-
" munion of air, and of a repercuſſive
" ſpirit, as ſhe produces by this means
" a vehement noiſe through her motion

" according to nature, ſhe becomes
" filled with a ſubject ſpirit; and ex-
" tending the ſuperficies and lines of
" her orbs, and being partly drawn
" downwards through the bulk of her
" ſpirit, and partly naturally contend-
" ing for ſupernal eſſences, ſhe loſes
" her ſpherical figure, and is tranſmuted
" into a human form. She changes
" therefore the ſuperficies ſubſiſting
" about a luciform and ethereal matter
" into a membranous form; but the
" lines approaching to a fiery nature,
" and coloured with the redneſs of fire,
" ſhe changes into the form of nerves,
" and afterwards aſſumes a humid ſpirit
" from theſe inferior regions. So that
" this, firſt of all, becomes a certain
" natural body to the ſoul, compacted

" from certain membranous ſuperficies,
" and from parts poſſeſſing the form of
" nerves, lines, and ſpirit: for they
" ſay that this is the root of the body;
" this they denominate a harmony, and
" affirm, that through this our external
" ſhelly veſtment is nouriſhed and con-
" nected."

In the third place, ſhould it be aſked why ſouls fall into bodies? I anſwer, with Proclus, becauſe they wiſh to imitate the providential energies of the gods, and on this account proceed into generation, and leave the contemplation of true being: for as divine perfection is twofold, one kind being intellectual and the other providential, and one kind conſiſting in an abiding energy and the

other in motion, hence ſouls imitate the prolific, intellectual and immutable energy of the gods by contemplation, but their providential and motive characteriſtic, through a life converſant with generation. As the intelligence too of the human ſoul is partial, ſo likewiſe is her providence; but being partial it aſſociates with a partial body. But ſtill farther, the deſcent of the ſoul contributes to the perfection of the univerſe: for it is neceſſary that there ſhould not only be immortal and intellectual animals, ſuch as are the perpetual attendants of the gods, nor yet mortal and irrational animals only, ſuch as are the laſt progeny of the demiurgus of the univerſe, but likewiſe ſuch as ſubſiſt between theſe, and which are by no

means immortal *, but are capable of participating of reaſon and intellect. And in many parts of the univerſe there are many animals of this kind; for man is not the only rational and mortal animal, but there are many other ſuch-like ſpecies, ſome of which are more dæmoniacal, and others approximate nearer to our eſſence. But the deſcents of a partial ſoul contribute to the perfect compoſition of all animals, which are at the ſame time mortal and rational.

Should it be again aſked, why therefore partial ſouls deſcending into generation are filled with ſuch material per-

* For the whole compoſite which we call man is not immortal, but only the rational ſoul.

turbation, and ſuch numerous evils? We reply, that this takes place through the inclination ariſing from their free will; through their vehement familiarity with body; through their ſympathy with the image of ſoul, or that diviſible life which is diſtributed about body; through their abundant mutation from an intelligible to a ſenſible nature, and from a quiet energy to one entirely converſant with motion; through a diſordered condition of being, naturally ariſing from the compoſition of diſſimilar natures, viz. of the immortal and mortal, of the intellectual and that which is deprived of intellect, of the indiviſible and that which is endued with interval; for all theſe become the cauſe to the ſoul of this mighty tumult and labour

in the realms of generation. For we purſue a flying mockery which is ever in motion; and the ſoul indeed, by verging to a material life, kindles a light in her dark tenement the body, but ſhe herſelf becomes ſituated in obſcurity; and by giving life to the body, ſhe deſtroys herſelf and her own intellect, in as great a degree as theſe are capable of receiving deſtruction: for by this means the mortal nature participates of intellect, but the intellectual part of death, and the whole becomes a prodigy, as Plato beautifully obſerves in his books of laws, compoſed of the mortal and immortal, of the intellectual and that which is deprived of intellect. For this phyſical law, which binds the ſoul to the body, is the death of the immortal life, but is

the cauſe of vivification to the mortal body.

The hymn to Apollo is added at the requeſt of a lady of ſingular worth, and the tranſlator's very particular friend.

PLOTINUS

ON

FELICITY.

BRITISH

PLOTINUS

ON

FELICITY.

SINCE it is univerſally believed that to live well and to be happy are placed in the ſame ſubject, may we not inquire whether felicity is to be attributed to other animals beſides man? For if it is allowed them, as far as the condition of their birth permits, to paſs through life without impediment, what ſhould hinder their living well, that is, in ſuch a manner as to be happy? For whether living well is ſuppoſed to conſiſt in the

ſound and proper poſſeſſion of *being*, or in acting agreeably to the deſign of Nature, according to both theſe acceptations living well belongs to other animals as well as to man. Thus birds are well conditioned, or enjoy a ſound exiſtence, and ſing agreeable to the inſtitutions of Nature in their formation, and after this manner they may appear to poſſeſs a deſirable life. But if we conſtitute felicity as a certain end, which is ſomething extreme in the appetite of nature, in this way all animals will be happy when they arrive at this extreme, and which, when obtained, Nature in them makes a ſtop, as having accompliſhed the whole of their exiſtence, and filled it with all that is wanting from beginning to end. But if any one objects to felicity being tranſ-

ferred to brutes, aſſerting that in this caſe it muſt belong to creatures the moſt vile and abject, and to plants themſelves, whoſe ſlender exiſtence arrives at its proper end; ſuch a one may appear to ſpeak abſurd, while he affirms other animals cannot live well becauſe they are reckoned of no worth; but he is not compelled to allow felicity to plants which he grants to all animals, becauſe plants are deſtitute of ſenſe. And, perhaps, ſome one may allow felicity to plants, ſince life is preſent even to theſe: but to live partly happens well and partly the contrary; as a power is given to plants that they ſhould be well conditioned and bear fruit peculiar to their Nature, and ſometimes that the contrary of this ſhould take place. Hence,

if pleaſure is the end which all beings purſue, and living well conſiſts in this, it will be abſurd to take away living well from the brutes. The ſame conſequences will enſue if tranquillity be ſuppoſed the univerſal end; as likewiſe from admitting that to live according to nature is to liye well. But whoever denies felicity to plants becauſe they are not endued with ſentient powers, cannot aſſign this to all animated beings: ſince if by ſenſation they mean not to be ignorant of paſſion or affection, it is neceſſary that *good itſelf* ſhould be a paſſion prior to that which is ſaid not to be concealed, as this is the poſſeſſion of a *being* according to Nature, although ſuch a poſſeſſion is concealed; and in the ſame manner that which is peculiar, although

it may not yet be acknowledged as peculiar: beſides it is neceſſary that that which is ſweet ſhould exiſt prior to our perception of its being ſweet. Hence, then, if wherever good is poſſeſſed a being is well conditioned, why is it neceſſary to add ſenſation? unleſs they place good not in a certain preſent affection or conſtitution, but rather in knowledge and ſenſation. But, in this caſe, they ſhould affirm that ſenſe itſelf, and the energy of a ſenſitive life, is good, and ought to confeſs that good is preſent to every percipient being conſidered as percipient. But if they affirm good to be conſtituted from both, as from the perception of a certain thing, or affection, after what manner, ſince both paſſion and its perception, conſidered

by themſelves, are indifferent, can they aſſert that to be good which is the reſult of both? But if they ſay that to live well is a certain good affection, and that ſtate of being when any one acknowledges good as preſent to himſelf, it is proper to interrogate ſuch whether any one from ſimply acknowledging this as preſent lives well, or whether it is neceſſary he ſhould not only know it is pleaſant but that it is good? But if it be neceſſary he ſhould know it to be good there will not for this purpoſe be any need of ſenſe, but of ſome power more excellent than ſenſe. To live well, therefore, will not belong to him who is diffuſed all over with pleaſure, but to him who is capable of knowing that pleaſure is good. And ſo the cauſe of living well will not

be pleaſure, but that *power* which is able to judge that pleaſure is good: and, indeed, that which judges is more excellent than paſſion and affection, for it is either reaſon or intellect, but pleaſure is paſſion only. But that which is irrational is by no means more excellent than Reaſon. How then can reaſon, neglecting itſelf, place that which exiſts in an oppoſite rank as more excellent than itſelf? But thoſe who attribute to plants, and to a ſenſe of this kind, a well-conditioned ſtate of exiſtence, appear to conceal from themſelves that they inquire after living well as after ſomething ſuperior to mere ſenſation, and that they place a better condition of being in a life more perfect and entire.

Hence we must subdue Passion to arrive at intellect, or the power of knowing & enjoying true good.

Again, whatever of felicity, they ſay, conſiſts in a rational life, but not in life ſimply conſidered, (not even if it is ſenſual) is, perhaps, rightly ſaid. But it is requiſite to interrogate ſuch, on what account they place felicity about the rational ſoul? whether they connect reaſon with felicity becauſe reaſon is more ſagacious, and can more eaſily inveſtigate thoſe things which are firſt according to Nature? or whether it is united with felicity, though it ſhould not be able to inveſtigate with ſagacity? But if reaſon participates more of felicity on account of its power of invention, felicity may be preſent where reaſon is abſent, to thoſe beings who are capable of purſuing things firſt according to nature. Reaſon, therefore, will perform the of-

fice of a miniſter, and will not by any means be eligible for its own ſake, nor again will it be the perfection of that which we denominate virtue. But if you ſhould ſay reaſon does not derive its dignity from things firſt according to nature, but is to be cultivated on its own account, it remains to inform us what beſides this is the work of reaſon, what is its nature, and what cauſes its perfection? For, indeed, it is neceſſary it ſhould be perfect, not on account of its inſpection concerning things prior by nature, but that its perfection ſhould conſiſt in ſomething elſe, and that it ſhould inherit another nature; and again that it ſhould not be in the number of things firſt according to nature, nor that from which theſe firſt beings are

– It is only in this case the Instrument

compoſed, nor at all of this kind, but that it ſhould be of all theſe the moſt excellent; for otherwiſe I cannot ſee how they can be able to aſſign the cauſe of its venerableneſs and worth. But ſuch as theſe, until they find out a better nature, muſt be permitted to doubt what it is to live well, to whom a power of this kind may belong, and after what manner, and among which of the preceding, felicity may be found.

Let us, therefore, reſuming the queſtion from the beginning, inquire in what felicity ought to conſiſt: indeed, ſince we conſtitute felicity in life, if we ſhould think life a term ſynonimous to vital beings, we ought to aſſign to all animals an ability of becoming hap-

py, and ſhould think that thoſe beings live well in energy, to whom a life one and the ſame is preſent, and which all animals are naturally capable of receiving. Nor ought we, on ſuch a ſuppoſition, ſo to diſtribute a matter of this kind as to allow an ability of happineſs to the rational nature and not to the irrational; for life will be that common ſomething which, whoever participates, ought to be capable of obtaining felicity, ſince beatitude would conſiſt in a certain life. Hence thoſe who affirm that felicity conſiſts in a rational life, and not in life univerſal, do not, I think, ſufficiently perceive that they eſtabliſh felicity as ſomething different from life: but they are compelled to call the rational power a quality, about which fe-

licity abides. According to theſe, however, a rational life exiſts as the ſubject; ſince about the whole of this felicity is entirely converſant; on which account it ſeems to be placed about another ſpecies of life, diſtinguiſhed from reaſon in the ſame manner as that which is prior from that which is poſterior. Since, then, life is multifariouſly predicated, and is diverſified according to firſt and ſecond, and ſo on in regular ſubordination; and ſince to live is affirmed equivocally in one reſpect of a plant, but in another of a brute, differing in plenitude and exility, certainly to live well, and ſimply to live, muſt be affirmed of all theſe in a certain analogical proportion. And if one vital being is but the image of another, doubtleſs one habit of living

well ought to be judged but the image of another. But if to whatever poſſeſſes a ſufficiency of life, that is, which in no part is deſtitute of life, felicity belongs, certainly felicity will be preſent alone to beings poſſeſſing a ſufficiency of life; ſince that which is beſt is preſent to theſe, and that is beſt in the order of beings which ſubſiſts truly in life, and is itſelf perfect life: for thus neither will its good be adventitious, nor will the approach of any thing external cauſe its ſubject to be placed in good. For what can be added to a perfect life that it may become the beſt? But if any one ſhould ſay that the nature of good muſt be added, his ſentiments will be correſpondent to our own, inquiring after this as abiding in the ſoul; for it

Felicity according to Aristotle. Is the energy of the rational soul according to virtue in a perfect life - Nichom Ethics

has often been ſaid by us, that perfect and true life flouriſhes in an intellectual nature, but that others are imperfect, mere images of life, neither living perfect nor pure; and again not poſſeſſing in reality more of life than its privation. And now, ſince we have ſummarily affirmed that all vital beings live from one principle in ſuch a manner as not equally to participate of life, it neceſſarily follows that the principle of life is the firſt life, and the firſt perfection.

If, then, man can poſſeſs a perfect life, certainly man from its poſſeſſion muſt be happy, otherwiſe we muſt attribute felicity to the gods alone if they only poſſeſs a life of this kind. But, becauſe we confeſs that felicity may likewiſe

abide in men, let us conſider after what manner this ſubſiſts: that man poſſeſſes a perfect life, not indeed if alone poſſeſſing one that is ſenſual, but from his participation of reaſon and true intellect, is already ſufficiently evident; but it may be inquired whether he enjoys this perfect life, as ſomething different from himſelf? Certainly he is not a happy man unleſs he poſſeſſes this felicity either in capacity or energy. But ſhall we ſay it abides in him as a part, and call it a perfect ſpecies of life? Or ſhall we not ſay that a man of a different deſcription from the happy man, poſſeſſes this as a part, by poſſeſſing it in a certain capacity, but that he is happy who exiſts in energy in a perfect life, and is arrived to that degree of excellence as to become

neighbouring trifles

with it perfectly the ſame? External circumſtances ſurround ſuch a one, which he does not aſſert to be parts of himſelf, becauſe he is unwilling they ſhould ſurround him; but if he wiſhed to be connected with them, they would, in this caſe, belong to him. To ſuch a one as this, then, it may be aſked, what is good? Perhaps he is good to himſelf from that which he poſſeſſes; but that which is of a ſuperior nature is the cauſe of that which flouriſhes in himſelf, and which is participated as good by others in a manner different from that good which it is conſidered in itſelf. But an evidence may from hence be derived, that he who is ſo affected deſires nothing farther; for what ſhould he inquire after? Nothing ſurely of a ſubor-

dinate nature; ſince he is conjoyned with that which is beſt. He therefore who lives in this manner poſſeſſes a ſufficient life; and if he is endued with virtue, he will be ſufficient to the enjoyment of felicity and the poſſeſſion of good; for there is no good which he does not poſſeſs; but that which he inquires after he ſeeks as neceſſary, not indeed for himſelf, but as requiſite to ſomething belonging to him, external and adventitious, that is, to body, with which he is connected, and not as peculiar, or belonging to the interior man: indeed this he well knows, and cares for his body in ſuch a manner as may beſt promote his enjoyment of an intellectual life. Hence he is not the leſs happy in adverſe fortune, for, as well as a life

This is true regeneration

of this kind, he abides in the ſame ſtate of felicity. Beſides, in the death of his domeſtics and friends, he is not ignorant of the nature of death: and the deceaſed themſelves, if worthy while living, were well acquainted with the nature of death. But if any moleſtation is produced by the diſſolution of his familiars and neceſſary friends, it does not affect the true inward man, but that part alone in the worthy man which is deſtitute of intellect, the peculiar moleſtations of which the happy ſoul does not receive.

This is attainable. though rudeness in the extreme. consummate virtue. contempt of opinions. & a profound conversion of the soul to Intellect.

But againſt this definition of felicity it may be objected, can the ſoul be happy while its energies are prevented by pains of the body and diſeaſe? Beſides,

what is to be ſaid if the worthy man ſhould be delirious or mad? For this is ſometimes effected by enchantments or deſire. How can a man in ſuch circumſtances live well and be happy? Not to mention the miſeries reſulting from want and an abject fortune; and, perhaps, ſome one conſidering theſe, may adduce againſt us the calamities of Priam, and affirm, that however he may bear theſe misfortunes with eaſe, yet his *will* can never concur with their endurance. But it will be ſaid, a happy life ought to be agreeable to our deſire, ſince the worthy man is not ſoul alone, but the nature of body muſt be enumerated with his eſſence, as far as the paſſions of the body are transferred to his ſoul; and again, that for the ſake of the body particular

things are purſued or avoided by the worthy man. Hence, ſince pleaſure is neceſſary to a happy life, how can a man be happy when ſurrounded with difficulties and pains? even if he is a good man whom adverſity of this kind oppreſſes? Indeed to the gods alone a diſpoſition of this kind, bleſſed and ſelf-ſufficient, belongs: but to men, with whoſe ſouls ſomething inferior is connected, felicity is to be inquired after about the whole compoſite, and not about one part alone, although the moſt excellent; which, as often as the ſubordinate part is ill-conditioned, is neceſſarily prevented from the proper energies of its nature; or if this be not admitted, it is neceſſary to caſt aſide body

and corporeal ſenſe, and thus ſelf-ſufficient to inquire after felicity.

- Objections -

But if reaſon places felicity in being free from ſickneſs and danger, and in never falling into great adverſities, no one can be happy while things of ſuch a contrary nature are dependant. But if felicity conſiſts in the poſſeſſion of true good, why is it requiſite, neglecting this, to inquire after other things which ought not to be aſſociated with felicity? For if felicity was the accumulation of things good, and at the ſame time neceſſary, or of goods greater and leſs, which are not only neceſſary but are called *goods*, it is requiſite that theſe likewiſe ſhould be preſent. But if it is proper that there ſhould be ſome

- He who depends on events for happineſs, is like one who expects to find support in walking from a rotten stick.

neglecting the things that are behind

I press forward towards the mark of the high calling - St Paul.

We must enter the place of contest, naked, and without the encumbrance of dress, striving for the most glorious of all prizes the Olympiad of the Soul.

Porphyrii - De Abstinentia lib 1. 27.

one end, and not many ends, (or elſe a man would not inquire after the end, but after ends) it is neceſſary to purſue that alone which is the laſt, and moſt excellent, and which the ſoul ſeeks after as ſomething which may reſide in the depths of its eſſence. But inquiry and will doe not tend to the non-poſſeſſion of this moſt excellent end; for diſcurſive reaſon does not chuſe a declination of things inconvenient from a principal deſire of Nature, but alone flies from and repels ſuch as are preſent, or deſires to conjoin things convenient. But the principal appetite of the ſoul is directed to that which is beſt, with which, when preſent, it is filled, and enjoys perfect repoſe: and this is the life which the prime deſire of the ſoul purſues. But

The primary desire of Nature is directed to things good.

that ſomething of neceſſaries ſhould be preſent, is not the wiſh of the ſoul, if we conſider the ſoul's deſire properly, and not according to the abuſe of words; ſince we alone think the preſence of theſe requiſite, becauſe, to the utmoſt of our ability, we decline from every thing evil: nor yet is this employment of declination to be principally deſired, for it is far more deſirable never to want ſuch a declination from evil. The truth of this is ſufficiently evident from neceſſaries when preſent, ſuch as health, and a privation of pain; for which of theſe in a wonderful manner attracts the ſoul to itſelf? Since it is cuſtomary to neglect preſent eaſe and health, and to be unconſcious of their poſſeſſion. But ſuch things as when preſent poſſeſs

no gentle attractive power of converting the ſoul to themſelves, cannot add any thing to our felicity; and it is conſonant to reaſon to believe, that things whoſe abſence is cauſed by the preſence of their offending contraries, are neceſſary rather than good: they are not, therefore, to be enumerated with the end, but while they are abſent, and their contraries depend, the end of life is to be preſerved perfect and entire. But, it may be ſaid, on what account does the happy man deſire theſe to be preſent and reject their contraries? Perhaps we may reply, not becauſe they confer any thing to felicity, but rather are, in ſome reſpects, neceſſary to exiſtence itſelf, in the preſent ſtate; but that their contraries either lead to non-

exiſtence, or diſturb, by their preſence, a man enjoying the end, at the ſame time not deſtroying that end; and becauſe he who enjoys that which is beſt, deſires to poſſeſs it alone, and not in conjunction with any thing elſe. But though any thing elſe ſhould occur, it would not take away the end, which is not abſent while this is preſent. And, indeed, though ſomething ſhould happen to the happy man againſt his deſire, he will not, on this account, loſe any part of his felicity; for if this be admitted, he muſt be daily changed, and fall off from felicity; as when he loſes a ſon, or ſuffers any loſs in his domeſtic concerns; ſince there are innumerable accidents which take place contrary to the will, and which detract nothing from

the true and invariable end of life. But it may be ſaid that great adverſities only leſſen felicity; but what is there among human concerns ſo great, which will not be deſpiſed by him who betakes himſelf to things far more excellent and ſublime, and is no longer dependent on ſuch as are ſubordinate? For ſince the worthy man would not eſteem the greateſt proſperity of any moment or worth, ſuch as the ſovereign command of nations, on the eſtabliſhing of cities, why ſhould he think the loſs of dominion, or deſtruction of his country, a grievous misfortune? But if he thinks any thing of this kind to be a great evil, or evil at all, he is to be reckoned ridiculous; and is no longer a truly worthy man, while he accounts timber and ſtones,

and by Jupiter the death of mortals, as a matter of great concern, when he ought to eſteem death far better than corporeal life. But what if he ſhould be ſacrificed, would he think death an evil to himſelf becauſe he is to be ſlain near the altars? Will he likewiſe account it a great matter that he is to be buried ignobly, and at a ſmall coſt, and is judged unworthy of a more lofty monument? But it is entirely puſillanimous to reckon ſuch things worthy of concern: beſides, if he ſhould be led captive, he poſſeſſes a power of freeing himſelf by death, if he cannot in ſuch a condition be happy. But if his domeſtic grand-children are led captive, will he be leſs happy? What then ſhall we ſay ſhould he depart from life with-

out having beheld relatives of this kind, would he migrate from ſuch a life with an opinion that ſuch a connection could not have ſubſiſted? But to think in this manner would be abſurd. But may he not think it poſſible for his kindred to be oppreſſed by ſuch caſualties? Will he be leſs happy in futurity in conſequence of the poſſibility of this opinion being realized? Rather indeed, though he ſhould think ſo, he will be happy. Hence, though ſuch circumſtances ſhould take place at preſent, he will conſider that the nature of the univerſe is ſuch, that he ſhould bear things of this kind, and that it is requiſite he ſhould follow the general order; beſides, many who are led captive, act better than before: and it is in the arbitration

of thoſe who are bound to make themſelves free; but if they abide in captivity, they either continue for ſome particular reaſon, and in this caſe there is nothing truly grievous in their condition, or they abide without reaſon, and in this caſe it is not proper to be the cauſe of their own perturbation. Indeed the worthy man is never oppreſſed with evil through ignorance of his own concerns, nor changed by the fortunes of others whether proſperous or adverſe: but when his pains are vehement, as far as it is poſſible to bear he bears them, and when they are exceſſive, they may cauſe him to be delirious: yet he will not be miſerable in the midſt of the greateſt pains: but his intellectual ſplendor will aſſiduouſly

ſhine in the penetralia of his ſoul, like a bright light ſecured in a watch tower, which ſhines with unremitted ſplendor, though ſurrounded by ſtormy winds and raging ſeas. But what ſhall we ſay if, through the violence of pain, he is no longer ſenſible, or is juſt ready to deſtroy himſelf? Indeed if the pain is ſo vehemently extended, he will, if ſenſible, conſult what is requiſite to be done, for in theſe concerns the freedom of the will is not taken away. But it is requiſite to know that circumſtances of this kind do not appear to men excellent in virtue ſo dreadful as to others, nor yet reach to the inward man; neither torments, nor griefs, belonging to himſelf, nor the particular difficulties with which others are oppreſſed, or this

would be a certain debility of our ſoul; which is then ſufficiently evident, when we think it requiſite that ſuch misfortunes ſhould be concealed from us, ſuch as death, when imminent or diſtant inconveniences, ſurveying ourſelves, and not the ſeeming evils, leſt we ſhould be affected with any moleſtations. But all this is the fault of our imbecility, which we ought vigorouſly to repulſe, nor (yielding to ſuch weakneſs) fear leſt any thing of moleſtation ſhould happen. But if any one objects that we are ſo conſtituted by nature that we ought to grieve for domeſtic misfortunes, he ſhould underſtand that, in the firſt place, all men are not ſo affected, and, in the next place, that it is the buſineſs of virtue to reduce the common con-

objection

dition of nature to that which is better, and to ſomething more honeſt than the deciſions of the vulgar; but it is more honeſt to conſider as things of no moment, all that appear grievous to our common nature: for the worthy man ought not to be as one rude and unſkilful, but, like a ſtrenuous wreſtler, ſhould vigorouſly repel the ſtrokes of fortune, endeavouring to throw his fortitude on the ground; ſince he knows that ſuch things are diſpleaſing to a common nature, but that to ſuch a nature as his own they are not really grievous, but are terrible only, as it were, to boys. Would he then, you will ſay, wiſh for things apparently afflictive? perhaps he may be unwilling to be connected with them; but when they happen, he op-

poſes virtue to their attacks, by means of which the ſoul is not eaſily changed and affected.

But what ſhall we ſay when the worthy man is no longer himſelf, being overwhelmed either with diſeaſe or magical arts? We reply, that if in ſuch a ſtate they allow he may retain his proper virtue, like one in a deep ſleep, what is there to prevent his being happy? Since they do not deprive him of felicity in ſleep, nor eſteem that interval of reſt as any hindrance to the happineſs of the whole of life: but if they deny ſuch a one to be worthy, the ſame conſequences will not enſue. But we ſuppoſing a man to be worthy, inquire whether, ſo far as worthy, he is always

Objection

happy. Again, if it is ſaid how can he be happy, although endued with virtue, while he does not perceive himſelf virtuous, nor energizes according to virtue? We reply, although a man does not perceive himſelf to be healthy, he may, nevertheleſs, be healthy: and again, he will not be leſs beautiful in his body, although not ſenſible of his beauty; and will a man be leſs wiſe if he does not perceive himſelf to be wiſe? But, perhaps, ſome one may ſay, that wiſdom ſhould be accompanied with ſenſe and animadverſion, for felicity is preſent with wiſdom in energy. We reply, if this energy of wiſdom was any thing adventitious, there might be ſome weight in the aſſertion; but if the ſubſiſtence of wiſdom is ſituated in a certain

eſſence, or rather in eſſence itſelf, this eſſence will neither periſh in him who is aſleep or delirious, or is denied to be any longer conſcious of his felicity: and, indeed, the energy of this eſſence reſides in the ſoul of ſuch a one, and is an energy perpetually vigilant; for then the worthy man, conſidered as worthy, energizes, whether in a dormant ſtate, or overwhelmed with infirmity. But an energy of this kind is not concealed from the whole itſelf but rather from ſome particular part; juſt as with reſpect to the vegetable energy in its moſt flouriſhing ſtate, an animadverſion of ſuch an energy does not tranſmigrate into the external man by means of a ſentient nature; and if we were entirely the ſame with our vegetable power,

there is no doubt but we ſhould energize, whenever ſuch a virtue was in energy: but ſince the caſe is otherwiſe, and we are the energy of that which is intelligent, we energize in conſequence of its energy. But perhaps ſuch an energy is concealed from us becauſe it does not reach any ſentient power; for to this purpoſe it ſhould energize through ſenſe as a medium: but why ſhould not intellect energize, and ſoul about intellect, preceding all ſenſe and animadverſion? For it is requiſite there ſhould be ſome energy prior to animadverſion, ſince the energy of intellect is the ſame with its eſſence. But animadverſion appears to take place when the energy of intellect is reflected; and when that which energizes according to

the life of the ſoul rebounds, as it were, back again, like images in a mirror, quietly ſituated in a ſmooth and poliſhed place, ſo as to reflect every form which its receptacle contains. For as in things of this kind, when the mirror is not preſent, or is not properly diſpoſed, the energy from which the image was formed is indeed preſent, but the reſemblance abſent: ſo with reſpect to the ſoul, when it energizes in quiet, certain reſemblances of thought and intellect beam on our imagination, like the images in the ſmooth and poliſhed mirror; and in a ſenſible manner, as it were, we acknowledge that our intellect and thought energize together with the former knowledge. But when this medium is confounded, becauſe the har-

mony of the body is disturbed, then thought and intellect understand without an image, and intellection is carried on without imagination. Hence intelligence may be considered as subsisting together with the phantasy, while, in the mean time, intelligence is something very different from the phantasy: besides it is easy to discover many speculations of men when vigilant and honest; actions, in the performance of which it is evident that we do not perceive ourselves to speculate and act; for it is not necessary that he who reads should be conscious he is reading, especially when he reads with the greatest attention; nor that he who acts vigorously should necessarily acknowledge his vigorous energy; and the same consequence ensues

in a variety of other operations; ſo that animadverſions appear to render more debile the actions which they attend; but when they are *alone*, they are then pure, and ſeem to poſſeſs more of energy and life. And hence when worthy men live in ſuch a ſtate, it follows that they live in a more perfect manner; ſince their life is not at that time diffuſed into ſenſe, and by this means remitted in its energy, but is collected into itſelf in one uniform, intellectual tenor.

But if it be objected, that a man of this kind cannot be ſaid to live; we, on the contrary, affirm, that he truly lives, but that his felicity is concealed from him, as well as his life; and if this is not conſented to, we think it juſt that,

allowing him to live and to be a worthy man, they inquire only whether, in ſuch a ſtate, he is happy, leſt by detracting from him life, they ſhould aſk whether he lives well: it is likewiſe proper that they ſhould not, by entirely taking away the nature of man, deliberate concerning his felicity; and laſtly, that they do not ſeek after the worthy man in external actions, after having granted that he is entirely converſant with that which lies deep in the ſoul. Nor ought they to think that his will is placed in external concerns; for felicity can have no ſubſiſtence if the worthy man is ſaid to affect externals, and to place his deſires in their poſſeſſion. All men, indeed, deſire to live well, and free from the incurſion of things evil; but if the wor-

thy man does not find theſe ſucceed according to his wiſh, he will nevertheleſs be happy. But if any one ſhould ſay that he is deceived, and wanders from reaſon, by only wiſhing for ſuch things, (ſince it is impoſible for evil not to exiſt) heought to aſſent to the propriety of our conduct in converting the will of ſuch a one to that which is intimately his own.

But if pleaſures are required in the life of ſuch a man, they cannot be the pleaſures of the intemperate, nor ſuch as are corporeal; for it is impoſſible that theſe ſhould be preſent without contaminating felicity. Nor, again, is the more abundant motion of gladneſs and mirth required; for why ſhould things of this kind be requiſite to true

felicity? But thoſe pleaſures alone are neceſſary which accompany the preſence of good, and which are neither placed in motion nor recently poſſeſſed: for things truly good are already preſent, and the worthy man is preſent to himſelf, and his pleaſure and ſerenity ever abides; for he is always ſerene, his ſtate is ever quiet, and his affection ſufficient, and he is never diſturbed, if truly worthy, by any of thoſe circumſtances of being which are denominated evil. But he who ſeeks after any other ſpecies of pleaſure in the life of a worthy man, ceaſes any longer to inquire after a worthy life.

Nor are the good man's energies entirely prevented by the changes of

fortune, but different energies will take place in different fortunes, yet all of them equally honeſt, and thoſe perhaps more honeſt which rightly compoſe jarring externals. But the energies of his contemplation, if they reſpect things particular, will perhaps be ſuch as he ought to produce from inquiry and conſideration; but the greateſt diſcipline always reſides with him, and is perpetually at hand, and this more ſo, though he ſhould be placed in the Bull of Phalaris, which is ridiculouſly called pleaſant, when twice or frequently pronounced; for what is there pronounced in agony, is pronounced by that which is placed in torment, the external and ſhadowy man, which is far different from the true man, who, dwelling by

himſelf, ſo far as he neceſſarily reſides with himſelf, never ceaſes from the contemplation of univerſal good.

But that the good man in particular is not a certain compoſite from ſoul and body, is evinced by a ſeparation from body, and a contempt of all that is called corporeal good. But it would be ridiculous to aſſert that felicity pertains to our common life; ſince felicity is a good life reſident in the ſoul, and is an energy not of the whole ſoul, nor of the animal or vegetable part, ſo as in any manner to border on corporeal ſenſations. For felicity is not placed in the magnitude, beauty, or proper habit of the body; nor again in the vigour and perfection of the ſenſes; ſince too

much proſperity of body and the ſenſes oppreſſes the ſoul with a dead weight, and draws her aſide from herſelf. But it is proper, by a retrograde proceſs, and by a departure from ſenſe, converting the ſoul to that which is beſt, ſo to attenuate the body, that the true man may appear to be perfectly different from externals.

But ſuppoſing a man to be both beautiful, great, and rich, and to poſſeſs univerſal empire; ſuch a one, deceived by ſuch trifling concerns, is not to be envied. Circumſtances indeed of this kind were perhaps never united in the perſon of one wiſe man; and if they were preſent, while he properly cultivates himſelf, he will break them in

pieces and diminiſh their power; by negligence of his body, wearing away its luxuries, and reſigning his ſovereign command: beſides, he will ſo care for the health of his body, that he will deſire not to be entirely unſkilled in the cure of diſeaſe and pain; ſo that in his youth he will deſire to learn arts of this kind, but in old age he will neither wiſh to be diſturbed with ſuch cares, nor with any corporeal pleaſures or corporeal concern, whether pleaſant or painful, leſt he ſhould be compelled to decline to the dark regions of body. But when ſituated in a painful condition, he oppoſes, as his guard, virtue, ever preſent with him, and ever ſufficient; and ſo prepares himſelf for every circumſtance of life, that neither in plea-

ſures, proſperous health, and vacation from labour, he may eſteem himſelf more happy, nor leſs bleſſed, when their oppoſites ſucceed: for ſince the former cannot increaſe felicity, certainly it can never be diminiſhed by the latter, their perfect contraries.

But it may be ſaid, if there are two wiſe men, the one poſſeſſing all that is judged conſonant, and the other all that is reckoned contrary, to nature, can both be equally happy? Certainly both, if they are equally wiſe; for if the one ſhould be beautiful in his body, and poſſeſs every thing beſides, which is neither ſubſervient to the acquiſition of virtue and wiſdom, nor to the contemplation of that which is higheſt and beſt,

nor to the enjoyment of the moſt excellent life, of what conſequence is their acquiſition? Since their poſſeſſor will be far from glorying, as if he was more happy than the wiſe man, who is deprived of their poſſeſſion: beſides, an abundance of ſuch things does not even confer to the end of the piper's art. But we, conſidering the happy man according to the infirmity of our nature, judge ſuch things to be grievous and horrible which the happy man conſiders as of the ſmalleſt importance; for otherwiſe he will not yet be wiſe and bleſſed, unleſs he firſt baniſhes from himſelf all fallacies of imagination of this kind, and is able to confide in himſelf, as one who is no longer capable of enduring evil: for after this manner he will live

intrepid in every ſtate, but if he fears any thing, he is not yet perfect in virtue, but is virtuous only by halves. And with reſpect to fear ariſing from ſome unexpected circumſtances of *being*, while the worthy man is intent upon other things, he will immediately endeavour to repel its attacks, and calm, either by threats or the aſſiſtance of reaſon, that conjoyned ſenſe, which is moved, as it were, with childiſh grief, by threatening, I ſay, without ſuffering perturbation; juſt like a boy who is reſtrained from doing wrong, by the awe excited from the preſence of another greater than himſelf. Nor will ſuch a man, on this account, be void of friendſhip and gratitude: for he is both friendly and grateful to himſelf, and to thoſe with

The irrational part of the worthy man like the Boy.

whom he is connected. And ſince he gives to his friends, what he attributes to himſelf, he will be a peculiar friend, and will at the ſame time live in the enjoyment of intellect.

But he who does not place the worthy man in ſuch an exalted intellect, but ſubjects him to the power of fortune and to the fear of evil, certainly adduces a different character from that which we think belongs to the worthy man, and preſents us with a mixed character and life, compoſed from good and evil: ſuch indeed as is not eaſy to be found, and when found, is not deſerving of the name of felicity; poſſeſſing nothing great, either pertaining to the excellency of wiſdom or the purity of good-

neſs. Felicity, therefore, cannot conſiſt in a common life; and Plato rightly judges, that the chief good is to be ſought from above, and muſt be beheld by him who is wiſe, and wiſhes to become happy in futurity; and that he muſt ſtudy to approach to its ſimilitude, and to live its exalted life: it is requiſite therefore to poſſeſs this alone, in order to obtain the end of life. And the wiſe man will eſteem all beſides as certain mutations of place, which, in reality, confer nothing to felicity; in every circumſtance of being he will conjecture what is right, and act as neceſſity requires, as far as his abilities extend; and though living a life ſuperior to ſenſe, he will not be hindered from taking a proper care of the body with which he is

connected, always acting similar to the musician, who cares for his lyre as long as he is able to use it, but when it becomes useless and ceases any longer to perform the office of a lyre, he either changes it for another, or abstains entirely from its exercise, having an employment independant of the lyre, and despising it lying near him, as no longer harmonious, he sings without its instrumental assistance. Yet this instrument was not bestowed on the musician from the first in vain, because it has often been used by him with advantage and delight.

PLOTINUS

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WHOEVER inquires from whence evils originate, and whether they happen about things themſelves in general, or about ſome particular kind of things, will begin his inquiry in a proper manner, if he firſt eſtabliſhes what evil is, and defines its nature; for thus it will appear, from whence evil ariſes, where it is ſituated, to what it belongs,

and if it has any real exiſtence in the nature of things. But here a doubt ariſes, by which of our internal powers we may be beſt able to perceive the nature of evil; ſince our knowledge of every thing is produced by a certain ſimilitude between the object and its percipient. Thus, becauſe intellect and ſoul are certain ſpecies, or forms, they poſſeſs a knowledge of forms, which at the ſame time they naturally deſire. But how can any one imagine a form of evil, ſince it is conceived as the total abſence of good? But if becauſe there is the ſame ſcience of contraries, and evil is contrary to good, on this account we obtain a knowledge of good and evil, it is neceſſary that whoever underſtands evil ſhould diſcern good; ſince things

more excellent juſtly precede ſuch as are more baſe, and forms antecede ſuch things as are not forms, but are rather accounted their privations. Again, therefore, a queſtion worthy of ſolution preſents itſelf, in what manner good is contrary to evil? Perhaps it may be ſaid, becauſe good is firſt in the order of things, but evil the laſt; or certainly good is as form and evil as privation: but the ſolution of this muſt be deferred to the latter part of our diſquiſition.

For the preſent, then, let us define the nature of good, as far as the preſent diſputation requires. Good, then, is that ſublime principle from which all things depend, or which all things deſire, deriving from this their origin,

and being perfectly indigent of its preſence to the continuance of their ſubſiſtence: but good itſelf is in want of nothing, but is perfectly ſufficient to itſelf, independant of deſire; it is the meaſure and bound of all things, from itſelf producing intellect, eſſence, ſoul, life, and intellectual energy; all which are beautiful; but intellect, which is the beautiful itſelf, reigns over all that is beſt in the intelligible world: an intellect not ſuch as we poſſeſs, converſant with propoſitions, and perceiving what reaſon collects; inferring one thing from another, and beholding things through their conſequences, as if void before its perception, although at the ſame time it ſubſiſted as intellect. The ſupreme intellect of which we are now

ſpeaking is not of this kind, but is itſelf all things, dwells ever with itſelf, is perfectly united to itſelf, and, without poſſeſſion, poſſeſſes all things: for it does not poſſeſs theſe as different from itſelf, nor is one particular in itſelf ſeparated from another, but every thing there is a whole, and every where all, yet in ſuch a manner that nothing is confuſed, but particulars preſerve a proper diſtinction, and as particulars are beheld. Hence that which immediately participates of this intellect, participates not all things together, but as much as its capacity admits: it is the firſt energy of intellect, and the firſt eſſence, intellect in the mean time abiding in itſelf; and it energizes, indeed, about intellect, as if living by an energy of this kind. But

ſoul, perpetually turning round intellect, which it conſtantly beholds, and viewing its moſt intimate receſſes, contemplates through this alſo, as a mirror, the ſupreme divinity, the good itſelf; and in this delightful employment the tranquil and bleſſed life of the gods conſiſts, ſecure from the power of chance and the incurſions of evil. And if the proceſſions of divinity had ſtopped here, evil would never have had a being; but ſince there are things primarily good, there are alſo ſuch as are ſecondarily good, and all things are in regular ſubordination about the king of the univerſe, who is the cauſe of every thing good, and for whoſe ſake all things ſubſiſt. Laſtly, things ſecond in gradation are round that which is ſecond in the

order of cauſes, and ſuch as are third in deſcent, ſubſiſt about that which is third in dignity and rank.

If ſuch then is the condition of theſe true beings, and of that which is more exalted than being, certainly evil cannot be found in beings, and much leſs in that which is ſuperior to being, for all theſe are good. It remains, therefore, that if evil any where ſubſiſts, it muſt be found among non-entities, muſt be itſelf a certain ſpecies of non-entity, and be ſolely found about ſuch things as are mingled with non-entity, or are, in ſome reſpect, converſant with it. By non-entity in this place, I do not mean *nothing*, but that alone which is different from being; nor yet a non-

entity of ſuch a kind of motion and ſtation, which are ſaid to ſubſiſt about being; but I underſtand that kind of non-entity which is no more than the mere image of being, or ſomething even more remote than this from reality; and this is no other than our viſible univerſe, and the paſſions with which every ſenſible object is ſurrounded; or it is ſomething poſterior to theſe, and, as it were, accidental to them; or it is the principle of ſuch paſſions, or ſome of one of the particulars which repleniſh a ſenſible nature. It is lawful to conceive of a nature of this kind, as ſomething deſtitute of meaſure with reſpect to meaſure, as infinite with reference to bound, and as ſomething formleſs with reſpect to a forming power: beſides this, it is al-

ways indeterminate, always in want with relation to ſufficiency, never perfectly repoſing, on every ſide enduring all things, inſatiable, and extreme poverty and want. Nor are properties of this kind accidental to ſuch a nature, but appear to conſtitute its deluſive eſſence. We may add farther, that in every portion of it which you behold, you will find theſe affections collected together; but other things which participate of this, and are aſſimilated to it, become evil, without being evil itſelf. All theſe evil properties are therefore inherent in a certain general receptacle, and are in no reſpect different from the receptacle itſelf: and as good itſelf is prior to that good which happens to others, ſo evil itſelf is different from participated evil.

But it may be ſaid, where is immoderation to be found but in that which is deſtitute of meaſure? And where can meaſure reſide, unleſs in that which participates of meaſure? We reply, that as meaſure itſelf does not ſubſiſt in any thing meaſured, ſo immoderation itſelf abides external to the unmeaſured ſubject; for if it ſubſiſted in another, it muſt either ſubſiſt in that which is without meaſure, (but this cannot require immoderation, ſince it is already that which is without its meaſure) or it muſt exiſt in that which is meaſured; but it is impoſſible that the meaſured, conſidered as meaſured, ſhould be ſubject to the power of immoderation: indeed, it is requiſite there ſhould be ſomething according to itſelf, infinite, naturally

formleſs, and ſuch throughout as we have already explained, in deſcribing the nature of evil. Hence whatever beſides is of this kind, either has this formleſs nature mixed with its own, or at leaſt it becomes ſuch, by beholding its dark infinity, or becauſe it produces ſimilar evils. Hence it is the common ſubject of figure, form, and meaſure, is adorned with a foreign ornament, and poſſeſſes nothing from itſelf excellent and good; it is a mere image if compared with beings, and the very eſſence of evil, if eſſence can poſſibly belong to evil; and ſuch as this reaſon convinces us is the firſt evil, and evil itſelf.

But the nature of bodies, ſo far as it participates of matter, is evil, al-

though not the firſt evil, for it is endued with a certain form, but not ſuch a one as is true; it is, beſides this, deſtitute of life; is the ſource of the mutual corruptions and inordinate concuſſions of bodies; is a hindrance to the proper energies of the ſoul; and, by its perpetual flowing, glides ſwiftly away from eſſence, and, on this account, obtains the ſecond degree of evil. But the ſoul, conſidered in herſelf, and independant of her connection with body, is not evil, nor yet every ſoul while united with body. But from whence ariſes the depravity of the ſoul? From that irrational ſpecies which, as Plato ſays, is ſubſervient to the ſoul, and becomes, on account of its irrationalty, evil, and immoderate exceſs and defect; and from

which intemperance and timidity, and other vices of the ſoul, ſuch as involuntary paſſions, ariſe, and from which alſo thoſe falſe opinions proceed, by which the many are deluded in their purſuit of good, and declination of evil. But what produces an evil of this kind? And how can it be reduced into matter as its principle and cauſe? In the firſt place, a ſoul of this kind muſt be conſidered as not ſubſiſting external to matter, and that it is not thus evil from itſelf; it is therefore mingled with the immoderate, and becomes deſtitute of moderating and ornamenting form, becauſe it is merged in a body participating largely of matter. Beſides, the rational power, if obſtructed by ſenſe, is incapable of diſcerning truth, being

clouded by perturbations, and buried in the darkneſs of matter; by its compliance, in this caſe, deſcending into matter, and not beholding the permanent nature of eſſence, but the flowing and unreal condition of generation; the origin of which is the nature of matter, ſo perfectly evil, as to fill with its defect of good, the nature which only beholds it without merging into its dark abode. For whether or not it is perfectly void of good, ſo as to be its privation and pure defect, it renders whatever touches it ſimilar to itſelf. The perfect ſoul, therefore, verging to intellect, is always pure, caſting far from itſelf the folds of matter, together with every thing boundleſs, immoderate, and evil; and on this account, neither approaching to,

nor beholding, natures of ſuch a kind, it remains pure and perfectly bound in intellectual meaſure. But theſoul which does not abide in this manner, but departs from itſelf, ſubſiſting in a rank neither primary nor perfect, and being nothing more than the image of the former, is filled with an indefinite nature, ſo far as it is deficient, and beholds nothing but obſcurity; it now participates deeply of matter, looking at that which it cannot perceive, and as it is ſaid, ſurveying abſolute darkneſs.

If, then, the defect of good is the cauſe of the ſoul's beholding darkneſs, and being merged in obſcurity, the evil of the ſoul will be ſituated in darkneſs and defect, and this will be the firſt evil.

But the evil which is ſecond, will be that darkneſs itſelf, and nature of evil, not reſident in, but antecedent to, matter; or certainly evil itſelf does not conſiſt in a certain defect, but in univerſal privation of good. Hence, whatever is deficient of good in a ſmall degree is not yet evil, ſince it is capable, from its nature, of becoming perfect; but whatever is perfectly deſtitute of good, and ſuch is matter, is evil in reality, poſſeſſing no portion of good: for, indeed, matter does not (properly ſpeaking) poſſeſs being, by means of which it might be inveſted with good, but being is only equivocally affirmed of matter. Whatever therefore is defective is not good, but that which is univerſally defective is evil itſelf; and an ability of that

which is already evil of falling into greater evil, is a defect of a middle condition: from whence it is requiſite to conſider evil itſelf, not as any particular evil, like injuſtice, or any other certain depravity, but as that univerſal ſomething which is none of theſe, and o which all other evils are only ſpecies, diſtinguiſhed by certain additions: as, for inſtance, a particular depravity in the ſoul; and again the ſpecies of this depravity, either according to the matter about which it ſubſiſts, or according to certain parts of the ſoul; ſo that its evil may partly conſiſt in what it beholds, partly in the incentives of appetite, and partly in its paſſivity. But if any one places evils likewiſe external to the ſoul, it is proper to inquire how diſeaſe, de-

formity, and poverty, may be reduced to the nature of evil? Perhaps diſeaſe may be ſaid to be a defect or exceſs in compoſite bodies, ariſing from matter, which cannot ſuſtain order and meaſure: but that deformity is matter, reſiſting and not vanquiſhed by the acceſſion of form: and laſtly, that poverty is the want and privation of what we naturally require on account of that matter with which we are united, and which is naturally indigent. And if this is the caſe, it muſt not be ſaid that we are the principle of evils, as if from our peculiar nature we were evil, but that theſe things are prior to our nature, and that the vices which occupy the generality of mankind detain them againſt their will, and that to ſome ſouls, though not to

all, a power is given of flying beyond the reach of evil. But the matter of bodies is the evil of our preſent nature; nor is the depravity of men evil itſelf; ſince a few are to be found deſtitute of evil, which they ſubdue by that exalted principle contained in their nature, and which is entirely ſeparate from matter.

But let us conſider how we are to underſtand that aſſertion of Plato, that evil cannot be extirpated, but exiſts from neceſſity; and again, that it does not dwell with the gods, but continually ſurrounds a mortal nature, and this inferior place. Is this ſaid becauſe the celeſtial region is always free from the incurſions of evil? Since it is moved in perpetual order and ornament, and is

free from all injuſtice and iniquity. To which we may add, that the ſtars are perpetually moved in a beautiful order, and in the ſame invariable rounds, without injuring each other in their courſe; but on earth injuſtice and iniquity, deſtitute of order, are found, for this is a mortal nature, and an inferior place. But when *he* ſays, we muſt fly from hence, he cannot mean with reference to our terrene ſituation; for, as he afterwards obſerves, to fly from hence is not to depart from earth, but this is to be accompliſhed only by the man who, while an inhabitant of earth, with reſpect to his corporeal part, lives in a juſt and holy manner, united with prudence: as if he had ſaid we ſhould fly from evil, which, with reſpect to man,

is depravity, as well as the conſequences reſulting from depravity. But when Theodorus in this dialogue obſerves, that evils might be entirely extirpated, if he (Socrates) could only perſuade men that his doctrine was true, Socrates denies the poſſibility of this, and aſſerts, that evils have a neceſſary ſubſiſtence, and that it is neceſſary that there ſhould be ſomething contrary to good. And here you will inquire how it is poſſible that human evil, that is, depravity, ſhould be contrary to good? We reply, becauſe it is contrary to virtue; but virtue is not good itſelf, but a certain good which enables us to overcome the evil of matter. But, you will again aſk, how can any thing be contrary to good itſelf, for it is not to be ranked among qualities: beſides, what

neceſſity is there that contraries ſhould always mutually attend each other, and nothing of a contrary nature be found without that to which it is contrary? For though in conſequence of there being ſuch a thing as health there may alſo be diſeaſe, yet it does not neceſſarily follow that there is. Perhaps Plato did not think that a neceſſity of this kind was true in every order of contraries, but always in that which is contrary to good. But if good itſelf is eſſence, or rather above eſſence, what can be found contrary to it? For that nothing is contrary to eſſence is ſufficiently manifeſt in particular eſſences by induction; but whether or not there is ſomething contrary to eſſence, ſimply conſidered, is not yet demonſtrated. But what can

be contrary to univerſal eſſence itſelf, and to the firſt principles of the univerſe? Perhaps that which is not eſſence will be contrary to eſſence, but to the nature of good, the nature and principle of evil will be perfectly contrary, if it is any where to be found; for both are principles, the one of things evil, and the other of ſuch as are good, and every thing in the nature of the one is contrary to every thing in the nature of the other. Hence the wholes themſelves are contrary, and more contrary than other things; for other contraries are either placed in the ſame ſpecies or in the ſame genus, and agree in ſomething common to each in which they ſubſiſt. But what ſhould prevent things being eſpecially contrary to each other which

ſubſiſt perfectly apart from each other, and in ſuch a manner that every thing which fills the nature of the one, is contrary to every thing which accompliſhes the nature of the other? eſpecially if ſuch things are contrary which are diſtant from each other by the greateſt of all intervals. Indeed the contraries to bound and meaſure, and whatever elſe is the property of a divine nature, are infinitude and immoderation, and all that belongs to the nature of evil. Hence the whole of the one is contrary to the whole of the other; the being of the one is fallacious, primary and true fallacy, but the being of the other is true being, and the falſity of that is contrary to the truth of this; and all that reſpects the eſſence of the one

is contrary to all that reſpects the eſſence of the other. On which account it is ſufficiently evident, that it is not every where true that nothing is contrary to eſſence, ſince we ſhould confeſs fire and water as contrary to each other, although a common matter was not preſent, in which heat, cold, humor, and dryneſs reſide as accidents. But if they ſhould ſubſiſt in themſelves alone, and without a common ſubject, ſufficiently perfect, in this caſe they would be contrary to each other, eſſence to eſſence. Hence ſuch things as are perfectly ſeparated from each other, which poſſeſs nothing in common, and are diſtant from each other in the extreme, are contraries in their very nature; ſince contrariety does

not take place according to a certain quality, nor entirely according to every genus of things; but becauſe things are much diſtant among themſelves, likewiſe ſo far as they are compoſed from oppoſites and produce ſuch things as are contrary.

But why if there is good is it neceſſary there ſhould be evil? Shall we ſay becauſe matter is neceſſary to the univerſe? For the world is neceſſarily compoſed from contraries, and could not exiſt independant of matter. The nature of the world therefore is mixed from neceſſity together with intellect. Indeed whatever in this world proceeds from divinity is good, but evil, ſays Plato, originates from an antient nature,

ſignifying the ſubject matter of all things beheld, not yet inveſted with ornament. But how does he call this a mortal nature? For when he ſays that about this place evils revolve, he doubtleſs means the univerſe; perhaps his meaning is to be underſtood by what he ſays in the Timæus, where he repreſents the mundane architect thus ſpeaking to the inferior divinities; "But becauſe ye are ge-
"nerated ye are not immortal, nor yet
"ſhall your nature ever be diſſolved,
"being preſerved ſafe from deſtruction
"by my power." And if this be the caſe, it is rightly ſaid that things evil cannot be extirpated. By what means then may any one avoid evil? not by flying, ſays he, from place to place, but rather by acquiring virtue, and remo-

ving himſelf from body; for thus he will ſeparate himſelf from matter; ſince while adhering to body he adheres alſo to matter. But Plato diſcovers the manner in which ſeparation or non ſeparation takes place: and beſides, that to be with the gods ſignifies to reſide in the intelligible world, for every thing there is immortal and divine. But it is lawful to conſider the neceſſity of evil in this manner; that ſince good cannot remain alone without communicating its beneficence, but muſt, from the perfect plenitude of its nature, be perpetually exuberant, it is neceſſary that, by a certain far-diſtant degreſſion from good, evil ſhould at length ariſe; or that, by a certain perpetual ſubjection and diſtance, it is neceſſary that ſomething laſt

in the order of things ſhould take place, beyond which nothing farther can be produced, and that this ſhould be evil itſelf: for ſince it is neceſſary there ſhould be ſomething after the firſt, it is alſo neceſſary there ſhould be ſomething laſt; and this is matter, the mere ſhade and privation of good, which unavoidably occaſions the neceſſity of evil. But perhaps ſome one may object, that the evil of mankind does not originate from matter, neither our ignorance nor evil deſires; and that if any one deviates from rectitude through the evil of body, matter is not to be accuſed as the artificer, but form; ſuch as heat and cold, bitter and ſalt, and other ſpecies of humors, beſides vacuities and repletions; repletions not ſimply conſidered,

but a particular kind; and that there is altogether ſomething which produces a difference of deſire: to which may be added, the diſagreement of fallacious opinions; by all of which it appears, that form rather than matter is our preſent evil. But although this were admitted, yet ſtill they muſt confeſs that matter is evil; for whatever is produced by quality reſiding in matter, yet a quality of this kind, does not produce any thing ſeparate and apart from matter; as the figure of the axe cannot cut without the conjunction of the iron. Beſides, the forms reſiding in matter are not the ſame as if they ſubſiſted by themſelves: but certain material reaſons abide in matter, corrupted by their union, and full of a material nature. For nei-

ther would fire ſeparated from a material connection burn, nor would any other natural form detached from matter operate in the ſame manner as at preſent. Matter, indeed, is the miſtreſs of all her apparent forms, which ſhe depraves and diſſolves, every where mixing with every form, her own depraved and contrary nature. She does not, indeed, produce evil by oppoſing cold to heat, but ſhe oppoſes to the ſpecies of heat her own privation of ſpecies, and to form her dark and formleſs nature: to whatever is of a meaſured nature ſhe oppoſes deficience and exceſs, and thus continues to debaſe whatever ſhe approaches, till form perfectly yields to the dominion of matter: juſt as in animal nutrition, what is aſſumed with-

in, no longer remains the ſame as before its aſſumption, but in a dog it becomes blood, and entirely canine, and all the humors are correſpondent to the nature of the recipient. Hence, if body is the cauſe of evils, matter is likewiſe the ſource, on the preceding account. But perhaps ſome one may ſay, that it is neceſſary to ſubdue theſe evils; but he who is able to vanquiſh them is not pure unleſs he flies beyond their reach. And more vehement deſires proceed from a certain complection of bodies, which are different in different bodies, ſo that it is no eaſy matter to be victorious in each; but ſome are of a duller genius and imbecil in judging, becauſe they are of a frigid nature through the evil of body, and are moved with dif-

ficulty and reſtraint; while others, on the contrary, are carried about with an unbridled levity. The truth of this is evinced by our corporeal habits, which are different at different times; for when we are full both our deſires and thoughts vary from thoſe which take place when we are empty. So that, in ſhort, that which is altogether deſtitute of meaſure is primarily evil, and whatever is deſtitute of meaſure either by ſimilitude or participation, is evil in the ſecond place, becauſe of its connection with the perfectly immeaſurable. Again, darkneſs itſelf is evil in the firſt place, and that which is dark in the ſecond degree. Depravity likewiſe, ſince it is in the ſoul immoderation and ignorance, obtains the ſecond place of evil, yet is not evil

itſelf; ſince neither is virtue the firſt good, but is accounted good, ſo far as it is ſimilar to or participates of good itſelf.

But how ſhall we know theſe and among the firſt depravity; for we may know virtue by intellect and prudence, for it knows itſelf. But how ſhall we know depravity? Shall we ſay, that as by a rule we diſcern the crooked from the ſtraight, ſo we apprehend vice as ſomething incongruous to virtue. But do we know vice by beholding it? Indeed, perfect vice we cannot perceive by beholding, for it is infinite. Hence, by a certain ablation while we aſſert that it poſſeſſes nothing of virtue, we conſider how much that which is not perfect vice

is deficient from virtue; and on ſeeing a part, and ſuſpecting from the part which is preſent, the reſt which is abſent, and is contained in the whole ſpecies, we form, by this means, our judgement of vice in the indefinite itſelf, diſmiſſing that which was taken away, as no longer ſubſervient to our deſign. But ſurveying matter as a deformed face, and a nakedneſs which the ſupervening ornaments of reaſon cannot conceal, we gain a glimpſe of its deformity, by conceiving a certain defect of form. But after what manner can we know that which is totally deſtitute of form? Perhaps, by totally taking away form, the whole which remains, and is deſtitute of ſpecies, we aſſert to be matter; in the mean time, admitting within ourſelves a cer-

tain boundleſs nature, while beholding matter, we diveſt it of univerſal form. Hence, in a ſurvey of this kind, intellect is in a manner different from itſelf, and almoſt not intellect, while it dares to behold what is not its own: juſt like the eye when turning from the light that it may view darkneſs, which at the ſame time, it cannot perceive, becauſe it relinquiſhes the light; neither can it ſee darkneſs together with light; nor again is it poſſible to behold any thing without the preſence of light. As much therefore as is poſſible, it views the obſcurity of darkneſs, by excluding the preſence of light. In like manner, intellect, concealing in its inmoſt penetralia its divine and proper light, and leaving, as it were, its own nature, pro-

ceeds into the dark receptacle of matter, where all is deformity and ſhadow; and becoming deſtitute of its own light, aſſumes a condition contrary to its nature, that it may behold what is contrary to itſelf. And thus much may ſuffice concerning inquiries of this nature. But it may be aſked, ſince matter is entirely deſtitute of quality, how can it be ſaid to be evil? Perhaps it is ſaid to be void of quality, becauſe of itſelf it poſſeſſes none of the qualities which afterwards reſide in it as their ſubject: nor yet is it ſaid to be void of quality, in ſuch a manner as if it had no peculiar nature. And if it has any nature, what ſhould hinder our calling this nature evil? I do not mean evil, as if it was indued with a certain quality, ſince a thing is

then ποιὸς, or *ſuch*, when, by its preſence, ſomething elſe receives the ſame denomination. *Such*, therefore, is an accident, and conſequently is inherent in a ſubject; but matter is not inherent in another, but is that general ſubject about which all accidents exiſt. Since, then, whatever is denominated *ſuch*, poſſeſſes the nature of an accident; matter, which is of a different nature, requires a different appellation. Beſides if quality itſelf is different from that which is called *ſuch*, how can matter, to which quality does not belong, be denominated *ſuch*? It is therefore properly called evil, and, at the ſame time, deſtitute of quality: ſo that it is not to be accounted evil, becauſe it poſſeſſes quality, but rather becauſe deprived of

it: for, indeed, if it was form, it might perhaps be evil, but would not be of a nature contrary to form.

But a nature contrary to univerſal form is privation; but privation is always in another, and has no ſubſiſtence in itſelf. If evil, therefore, is ſituated in privation, its evil will conſiſt in its privation of form; and ſo it cannot ſubſiſt by itſelf. Hence evil and depravity in the ſoul will be privation, and it will be no longer requiſite to receive any thing external as the cauſe of its evil, becauſe other reaſons utterly deſtroy the ſubſiſtence of matter; but the preſent reaſons, though they admit its ſubſiſtence, yet deny that it is evil. Nothing, therefore, external is to be ſought after

as evil; but the evil of the ſoul muſt be conſidered as the abſence of good.

But if privation of form reſpects being, and in the ſoul there is privation of good, which produces its depravity, it follows that the ſoul is totally deſtitute of good, conſidering, in this caſe, privation in the extreme. Beſides, if this is the caſe, neither can it poſſeſs life, while it is yet ſoul; and if ſoul is deſtitute of life, it muſt be inanimate, and ſo be both ſoul and not ſoul. The ſoul, therefore, poſſeſſes life according to the *reaſon* of her nature, but ſhe does not poſſeſs a privation of good from herſelf. Hence ſhe is boniform, as endued with a good which is the veſtigie of intellect, and is neither evil from herſelf, nor the

firſt evil. Nor, again, is the firſt evil accidental to the ſoul, ſince all good is not abſent from her eſſence.

But what if any one ſhould affirm that evil in the ſoul is not a univerſal, but only a particular, privation of good? Indeed, if this is the caſe, the ſoul, partly poſſeſſing, and partly deſtitute of good, will have a mixed ſenſe, and will not poſſeſs pure evil; and ſo we ſhall not have diſcovered primary and pure evil, and the good of the ſoul will be ſeated in her eſſence, but evil will be only accidental; unleſs, perhaps, it may be ſaid, that evil is an impediment to the ſoul, in the ſame manner as that which obſtructs the ſight of the eye is a hindrance to its viſion. But if this is

the caſe, evil will be the cauſe of the ſoul's evil, and the cauſe in ſuch a manner as if evil itſelf was ſomething different from the impediment. If, then, vice is the impediment of the ſoul, certainly vice will not be evil itſelf, but the cauſe of evil; ſince virtue is not good itſelf but that which confers to its acquiſition. Hence, if virtue is neither the beautiful nor good itſelf, vice will be neither the baſe nor evil itſelf. But we have ſaid that virtue is neither the beautiful nor good itſelf, becauſe prior to virtue, and above it, the beautiful and the good itſelf abides; hence virtue is to be accounted beautiful and good by a certain participation; and as the ſoul, aſcending on high by the aſſiſtance of virtue, meets with the beautiful and the good

itſelf, ſo in its deſcent from depravity, it at length arrives at evil itſelf, which it beholds as far as it is poſſible to view its baſe and deformed nature. Laſtly, when it has accompliſhed its deſcent, it becomes inveſted with evil, and profoundly ruſhes into the region of diſſimilitude, in which, being totally merged, it is ſaid to have fallen into dark mire and filth. Hence, when the ſoul ſinks into univerſal depravity ſhe is no longer depraved, but acquires a different nature and a worſe condition; for depravity is as yet ſomething human mingled with ſome portion of a contrary nature. The vicious man, therefore, dies, ſo far as the ſoul can die, and the death of the ſoul is both while merged in body, to deſcend into matter and be

filled with its darkneſs and deformity, and after it lays aſide body, to return into it again, till after proper purgation it riſes to things ſuperior, and elevates its eye from the ſordid maſs: for, indeed, to deſcend into Hades, and fall aſleep in its dreary regions, means nothing more than to be profoundly merged in the filth and obſcurity of body. But it may be ſaid that depravity is the debility of the ſoul; ſince an evil ſoul is eaſily affected by every impulſe, and readily inclines to every vice; that it is prone to luſt, ſubject to anger, and inconſiderately yields to the lighteſt impreſſions of imagination, juſt in the ſame manner as the moſt debilitated productions of nature or art, which are eaſily deſtroyed by whirlpools and winds.

But it is requiſite to inquire of the authors of this hypotheſis what the imbecility of the ſoul is, and from whence it originates? For imbecility in the ſoul is not entirely like that in bodies; but as corporeal debility is an incapacity of purſuing the proper employment of the body, and a diſpoſition to become paſſive in the eaſieſt manner, ſo almoſt with reſpect to the ſoul a certain ſimilitude of proportion produces the appellation of debility, unleſs perhaps matter is aſſigned as the cauſe of the debility of each. But let us endeavour more accurately to inveſtigate what is the cauſe of this infirmity of the ſoul; ſince neither a nature that is denſe nor rare, exuberant or deficient, or any diſeaſe, ſuch as a fever, renders the ſoul infirm: beſides it is ne-

ceſſary that a debility of this kind ſhould either entirely reſide in ſouls perfectly ſeparated from matter, or in ſuch as are united with matter, or in each of theſe. But in ſeparate ſouls there is no debility, for theſe are all pure, and, as it is ſaid, winged and perfect, ever performing their proper employment: it remains therefore that debility muſt belong to ſouls fallen into body; ſince ſuch as theſe are neither pure nor have atoned for the evil contracted by corporeal involution. But the debility of theſe is not an ablation of any thing, but the preſence of ſomething foreign to their nature, as of the pituita, or the bile, or the like diſorders to which the body is ſubject. If then we rightly apprehend the cauſe of the ſoul's lapſe into body, we ſhall have

found what is the debility of the ſoul. There is, indeed, in the order of things matter, there is likewiſe ſoul, and one place is, as it were, aſſigned to both; for the place of matter is not ſeparate from the place of ſoul, as if the place of matter was in the earth, but of the ſoul in air: but the place of the ſoul, which is ſaid to be ſeparated from matter, ſignifies only that the ſoul is not in matter; and this indicates that it is not united with matter, and that a certain *one* is not produced at the ſame time from matter and ſoul. Laſtly, this ſignifies that the ſoul is not, as it were, in a material ſubject, and this is the meaning of the ſoul's ſeparation from matter. But the powers of the ſoul are many, for ſhe poſſeſſes in herſelf that which is firſt, middle, and

laſt. Matter, indeed, being preſent, with wanton importunity affects, and deſires, as it were, to penetrate into the receſſes of the ſoul; but the whole place is ſacred, and nothing there is deſtitute of ſoul. Matter, therefore, oppoſing herſelf to ſoul, is illuſtrated by its divine light, yet is incapable of receiving that by which it is illuſtrated; for it cannot ſuſtain the irradiations of ſoul though preſent, becauſe, through its depravity, it is incapable of beholding a nature ſo pure and divine. But matter obſcures by ſordid mixture, and renders debile the light which emanates from ſoul: by oppoſing the waters of generation ſhe occaſions the ſoul's entrance into the rapid ſtream, and by this means renders her light, in itſelf vigorous and pure,

polluted and feeble, like the faint glimmerings from a watch tower beheld in a ſtorm; for if matter was never preſent the ſoul would never approach to generation; and this is the lapſe of the ſoul, thus to deſcend into matter and become debilitated and impure; ſince matter prohibits many of the ſoul's powers from energizing, comprehending, and, as it were, contracting the place which the ſoul contains in her dark embrace; hence what ſhe ſeizes from the ſoul by ſtealth ſhe renders evil till it is properly winged for flight. Matter therefore is the cauſe of the ſoul's debility and depravity, and is, on this account, the firſt evil: for if ſoul, becoming paſſive, has generated and communicated with matter, and has thus become evil, certainly matter,

through her preſence, is the cauſe; ſince without this ſhe would have for ever remained permanent and pure.

But we refer him who denies the exiſtence of matter to our diſputations on that ſubject, in which he will ſee the neceſſity of its ſubſiſtence. And if any one denies that there is ſuch a thing as evil in the nature of things, he muſt inevitably deny the ſubſiſtence of good, together with every appetite and declination, and all prudence and intelligence; for appetite always deſires good and declination avoids evil. And, laſtly, intelligence and prudence reſpect good and evil, and are themſelves placed in the number of goods. It is requiſite then there ſhould be good, perfect and

pure; alſo that which is mixed from good and evil; and that whatever participates more of evil ſhould decline to that which is totally evil, and whatever participates of evil in a leſs degree ſhould incline to good. How then can evil happen to the ſoul unleſs from its connection with an inferior nature? For, independent of this, neither deſire nor grief, neither anger nor fear, would ever ariſe; for fear reſults from the compoſite, leſt it ſhould be deſtroyed: and again, torments and griefs are produced from the diſſolution of the compound, and deſires increaſe when any thing diſturbs the compoſition, or when they eagerly ariſe, conſulting, as it were, for remedies, leſt any diſturbance ſhould be produced. But the phantaſy is a

certain impulſe of the irrational part externally produced, and which, from its paſſive nature, is ſuſceptible of impulſe. Laſtly, falſe opinions happen to the ſoul ſituated in the ſhade of truth, abiding there becauſe not perfectly pure: but its inſtinct verging to intellect is of an oppoſite nature; for it is proper to adhere only to intellect, and that the ſoul ſeated in this bright region ſhould perpetually remain there, without ever declining to that which is ſubordinate and evil. But evil is never permitted to remain by itſelf alone, on account of the ſuperior power and nature of good; becauſe it appears from neceſſity every where comprehended and bound, in beautiful bands, like men fettered with golden chains, leſt it ſhould be produced openly to the

view of divinity, or leſt mankind ſhould always behold its horrid ſhape when perfectly naked: and ſuch is the ſupervening power of good, that whenever a glimpſe of perfect evil is obtained we are immediately recalled to the memory of good, by the images of the beautiful with which evil is inveſted.

PLOTINUS

ON

PROVIDENCE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PLOTINUS

ON

PROVIDENCE.

THAT to commit the eſſence and compoſition of the world to chance and fortune is irrational, and alone the province of men deſtitute of intellect and ſenſe, is evident previous to the exerciſe of reaſon, although many ſufficient arguments have been urged for its refutation. But it is neceſſary that, deducing our diſputation from the beginning, we ſhould conſider the manner in which all things are and have been produced,

eſpecially ſince in ſome particulars, as if not rightly adminiſtered, a doubt ariſes concerning the providence of the whole; the conſequence of which is, that ſome entirely deny a providence, while others affirm that the world was conſtituted by an evil artificer. But for the preſent we ſhall neglect the conſideration of that providence, which, in producing particular effects, is a certain reaſon prior to the productions, deſcribing the manner in which it is fit they ſhould be conſtituted, or the impropriety of any thing exiſting which it is not neceſſary ſhould exiſt; and likewiſe pointing out the manner in which any thing is preſent or not preſent with us. Conſidering therefore, in the preſent caſe, the providence of the univerſe, we ſhall unite with this

every ſubſequent particular in amicable conjunction.

If, therefore, we ſuppoſe the world to be generated in a certain time, beyond which it had no exiſtence, we muſt allow the ſame providence which we ſubſtitute in the production of particular effects; I mean a certain foreſight, and diſcurſive conſideration of divinity deliberating, in what condition the world ſhould be eſpecially formed, and by what means it may be conſtituted, as far as poſſible, the beſt. But ſince we believe that the world always had a being, we ought in conſequence to aſſign a perpetual providence to the world; on this account, that it is formed according to intellect, an intellect not preceding

in time, but prior, becauſe the world is its offspring, and becauſe intellect is the cauſe, and, as it were, the principal form and exemplar of the world, and the world its image, perpetually ſubſiſting in the ſame manner, and flowing from thence as its ſource. But the manner of its production is as follows: the nature of intellect, and of being, is the true and primary world, not diſtant from itſelf, neither debile by any diviſible condition, nor indigent through any defect in its parts, ſince no part is there ſeparate from the whole, but the whole of its life, and the whole of its intellect, ever living in *one*, and at the ſame time ever intelligent, renders a part as the whole, and the whole amicable to itſelf; where one thing is not

a the Exemplar of the Universe full of all those incorp[illegible] real forms called Ideas which are the Original patterns of every thing existing in the sensible world.
b - having no parts
c - because indivi[illegible]
d In incorporeal natures all things are in all.

ſeparated from another, nor any thing ſolitary or deſtitute of the reſt; and on this account one thing is not detrimental nor contrary to another. But ſince intellect is every where, it abides every where perfect, neither admitting mutation nor the operation of one thing in another; for on what account ſhould it act in another when it is deſtitute of nothing? And why ſhould reaſon there produce reaſon, or intellect another intellect; ſhall we ſay becauſe it can of itſelf produce ſomething? But if this is the caſe, its being could not be altogether previouſly perfect, but it would ſo far endeavour to produce, and be moved, as it poſſeſſed ſomething in itſelf of a ſubordinate and imperfect nature. But to beings perfectly bleſſed, it is ſufficient

to abide in themſelves, and ever to remain in the ſame uniform mode of exiſtence; but to be engaged in a multiplicity of affairs is not ſufficiently ſafe, ſince it compels thoſe who are employed in this manner to wander from themſelves. But ſo far alone is the exemplar of this world bleſſed, as by not operating he produces the greateſt effects, and abiding in himſelf, in life ever vigilant and perfect, performs that which is neither contemptible nor ſmall.

Immutability is the most essential Character of the Divinity

from their true Essence

From this true intelligible world therefore, completely one, this intellect itſelf, our world depends, which is not truly one; it is diverſified therefore and diſtributed into multitude, in which one thing becomes foreign and diſtant from

another; ſo that friendſhip alone no longer flouriſhes here, but diſcord ariſes by diſtance from its ſource, and through its defect ſome things are neceſſarily in a ſtate of oppoſition to others: for here no part is ſufficient to itſelf, but while it externally ſeeks after ſafety, it brings war upon that by which it is preſerved. But this world was produced, not from any certain reaſoning power concluding that it ſhould be made, but from a neceſſity that a ſecondary nature ſhould inſeparably attend that which is primary and the exemplar; for this intelligible world is not of that kind that it could poſſibly be the laſt of things: it is indeed the firſt of beings, poſſeſſing an abundant power, a power univerſal, capable of producing every thing, without the neceſ-

It is the first — things begin in the Perfect & end in the Imperfect.

Incorporeals loose nothing of their essence by the communication to others — knowledge is an essence which by imparting suffers no diminution.

sity of inquiring in order to fabricate; since if we suppose it to operate by inquiry, its energy could not be spontaneous and truly its own; but its essence would be similar to that of an artificer, who does not derive from himself that which he produces, but provides it as something adventitious by learning and inquiry. Intellect, therefore, diffusing something of itself into matter, residing in itself ever quiet and immoveable, fabricates all things; but that which flows from intellect is reason, which will always continue to flow while intellect itself remains in the order of things. And as in the reason which is inserted into *seed*, all things exist together in the same, and one thing neither opposes, disagrees with, nor hinders another,

the soul the world

seminal reasons

while, in the mean time, from the evolution of the ſeed, ſomething is produced in the ſubject maſs, in which one part is diſtant from another, and mutual oppoſition and diſcord ariſes; ſo from one intellect, and reaſon flowing from it, this univerſe diſtant from itſelf aroſe. Hence, by a neceſſity of nature, ſome things are born amicable and ſalutary to each other, while others are pernicious and unfriendly; and partly with conſent, and partly averſe, they alternately deſtroy and are deſtroyed, ſo as by their decay to produce mutual generation without end. At the ſame time reaſon, the mighty builder, forms one harmony from theſe active and paſſive natures, and while every one produces a ſound peculiar to itſelf, binds the uni-

verſe in perfect union and conſent. For this univerſe is not ſelf-ſufficient, like intellect and reaſon in the intelligible world, but participating of theſe; hence it requires the band of ſympathy and conſent, from the concurrence of neceſſity and intellect: neceſſity drawing it down to an inferior nature, and cauſing it to incline into the privation, and, as it were, ſhade of reaſon, ſince it is itſelf deſtitute of reaſon; in the mean time intellect ruling over neceſſity. For the intelligible world is reaſon alone, nor is it poſſible that any other production can be equally perfect and divine; ſo that whatever is produced poſterior to intellect, neceſſarily paſſes into ſomething inferior and is no longer reaſon, nor yet a certain matter alone, becauſe

it is endued with order, and is therefore of a mixed and compoſite nature. What the world ends in therefore is matter and reaſon, but that from which it aroſe, and by which it is governed, is ſoul, urging that which is mixed, and which, without labour and fatigue, by its preſence alone eaſily rules the whole; nor can any one with propriety detract from the beauty of this corporeal world, or accuſe it, as if it was not the beſt of all things conſtituted with body; nor again blame the cauſe from which the world aroſe. In the firſt place, becauſe the world was formed by the ſame kind of neceſſity as the ſhadow by any ſubſtance obſtructing the light, and was not conſtructed by the counſel of reaſon, but from a more excellent eſſence, naturally gene-

rating an offspring ſimilar to itſelf; and neither, in the next place, ſuppoſing the world cauſed by diſcurſive conſideration, is it a diſgrace to its author; for he formed it a certain whole, entirely beautiful, ſufficient, and friendly to itſelf, equally according and correſpondent, as well in its leſſer as in its greater parts. He, therefore, who by a ſurvey of the parts blames the whole, blames fooliſhly and without a cauſe; ſince it is neceſſary, as well by comparing the parts with the whole, to conſider whether they accord, and are accommodated to the whole; as in ſurveying the whole to neglect a minute examination of its ſmalleſt parts; otherwiſe we can no longer be ſaid to blame the univerſe, but only ſome of its parts, conſidered as

detached from the whole: juſt as if a man ſhould ſolely confine himſelf to a ſurvey of the hair, or ſome particular limb, neglecting in the mean time to contemplate the divine ſpectacle of the whole man; or, by Jove, as if ſome one omitting every other animated being, ſhould bring the moſt abject as an inſtance of want of beauty in the whole, and neglecting all the human kind, ſhould adduce for the purpoſe *Therſites* alone. But ſince the generated world is a collective whole, if we apply the ears of our intellect to the world we ſhall, perhaps, hear it thus addreſſing us: "There is no doubt but I was produced "by divinity, from whence I am formed "perfect, compoſed from all animals, "entirely ſufficient to myſelf, and deſti-

" tute of nothing; becauſe all things are
" contained in my ample boſom, the
" nature of all generated beings, gods
" viſible and inviſible, the illuſtrious
" race of dæmons, the noble army of
" virtuous ſouls, and men rendered hap-
" py by wiſdom and virtue: nor is
" earth alone adorned with an endleſs
" variety of plants and animals, nor
" does the power of univerſal ſoul alone
" diffuſe itſelf to the ſea, and become
" bounded by its circumfluent waters,
" while the wide expanſe of air and
" æther is deſtitute of life and ſoul; but
" the celeſtial ſpaces are filled with illuſ-
" trious ſouls, ſupplying life to the ſtars,
" and directing their revolutions in ever-
" laſting order. Add too, that the ce-
" leſtial orbs, in imitation of intellect,

" which ſeeks after nothing external,
" are wiſely agitated in a perpetual cir-
" cuit round the central ſun. Beſides,
" whatever I contain deſires good, all
" things collectively conſidered, and par-
" ticulars according to their peculiar
" ability; for that general ſoul by which
" I am enlivened, and the heavens, the
" moſt illuſtrious of my parts, continu-
" ally depend on *good* for ſupport; to-
" gether with the gods which reign in
" my parts, every animal and plant,
" and whatever I contain which appears
" deſtitute of life: while ſome things
" are ſeen participating of being alone,
" others of life, and others beſides this
" are indeed with ſentient powers; ſome
" poſſeſs the ſtill higher faculty of rea-
" ſon, and laſtly, others are all life and

" intelligence; for it is not proper to re-
" quire every where equal things among
" ſuch as are unequal, nor to expect
" that the finger ſhould ſee, but to aſ-
" ſign this as the province of the eye,
" while another purpoſe is defired in the
" finger, which can, I think, be no
" other than that it remains as a finger
" and performs its peculiar office."

No one then ought to wonder that fire is extinguiſhed by water while it often conſumes other things, ſince ſomething different from water was the cauſe of its exiſtence; nor is it improper that fire ſhould be deſtroyed by ſomething not produced from itſelf; beſides its very being proceeds from the corruption of another, and it brings no impropriety

or diſorder from its corruption, and in the place of fire which is extinct, another fire flouriſhes and abides in the incorporeal heaven, where every thing abides in immaterial and immutable perfection: but in this intelligible heaven the univerſe ever lives, together with its moſt honourable and principal parts. But ſouls alternately changing their bodies paſs into other forms, and as often as a ſoul is able to riſe beyond the bounds of generation it lives with univerſal ſoul. But bodies are changed according to form, and particulars according to the whole, ſince animals are produced and nouriſhed by their interpoſition; for life is here moveable, but there immoveable.

For it is indeed requiſite that motion ſhould ariſe from an immoveable nature, and that from life, ever vigilant and flouriſhing in itſelf, another life ſhould emanate, as it were, a vital and unſtable blaſt, and nothing more than the breathing of a quiet and permanent life. Beſides, the mutual oppoſition and deſtruction of animals among themſelves happens from a neceſſity of nature, ſince they were not born with an eternal permanency of being, but are produced becauſe reaſon occupies the whole of matter, poſſeſſing all things in itſelf which abide in the ſupernal heaven; or from whence could they ariſe unleſs they exiſted there? Hence we may affirm, that the mutual injuries of men among themſelves proceed from the general appetite

of good, when incapable of obtaining good they deviate from the right way, and offenſively invade whatever they meet: like men wandering in the dark, who are liable every moment to moleſt and be moleſted by each other. But thoſe who act unjuſtly ſuffer puniſhment as well by the poſſeſſion of a depraved ſoul from actions that are evil, as becauſe in conformity to a certain order they paſs into an inferior place; for nothing can ever fly from the order of univerſal law. But order is not, as ſome think, inſtituted on account of the prevarication of order, nor law on account of the tranſgreſſion of law, as if theſe were produced through more debaſed natures, but rather becauſe order here is adventitious; ſo that becauſe order is, a tranſ-

greſſion of order takes place, and becauſe perfect law and perfect reaſon exiſt, a tranſgreſſion of law and reaſon enſues; but yet not in ſuch a manner as that things better become worſe, but becauſe beings indigent, and which ought to receive a better nature, often, either ſpontaneouſly or from fortune, or external impediment, cannot receive the good which they require: for whatever uſes adventitious order, cannot perhaps follow that order, either from the impediment of interior vice, or from ſome foreign circumſtance of being. Many things beſides ſuffer from others, which are unwilling at the ſame time to moleſt them, and purſue a different courſe; but animals, which poſſeſs of themſelves a ſpontaneous motion, as well tend to

things better as glide to inferior natures. But it is not perhaps proper to inquire from the very inclination or lapſe itſelf to a worſe condition; for the force of deviation, though ſmall at the beginning, by perſeverance of progreſſion in the ſame way, becomes more and more aſſiduouſly perplexed and erroneous: indeed, wherever body is preſent, deſire, by a neceſſity of nature attends; beſides, whatever primarily and ſuddenly occurs, and is not immediately perceived and apprehended, produces at length an election to that nature to which ſome individual was firſt inclined. But puniſhments follow under the adminiſtration of divine juſtice; nor is it unjuſt that the baſe ſoul ſhould ſuffer conſonant to its affection, nor is it requiſite that

thoſe ſhould be happy who perform nothing worthy of felicity; but the good alone are happy, becauſe it is on this very account that the gods are bleſſed. If, then, ſouls in this world are capable of felicity, it is not lawful to complain that in this region of ſenſe ſome are unhappy, but we ought rather to accuſe their imbecility, becauſe they are not able ſtrenuouſly to contend where the honours of virtue are propoſed as the reward. For who can juſtly complain that thoſe who are not yet become divine do not poſſeſs a divine life? Hence it is that poverty and diſeaſe are things of no moment to the good, and are uſeful to the evil: beſides, it is neceſſary ſometimes to be ſick, ſince we are inveſted with body. Nor are things of this

kind entirely uſeleſs to the common order and plenitude of the univerſe; for as reaſon, the great artificer of the world, makes the corruption of ſome things ſubſervient to the generation of others, (ſince nothing can eſcape its univerſal comprehenſion,) ſo a depraved body, and a ſoul languid by corporeal paſſions, are ſhortly comprehended under another ſeries and order, ſome of which confer to the good of the patient, as poverty and diſeaſe; but depravity brings ſomething uſeful to the univerſe, by becoming an example of its juſtice, and the ſource of abundant utility; for it renders ſouls vigilant, and cauſes them to inquire diligently what path they muſt purſue moſt powerfully to decline the precipice of evil. It is likewiſe ſubſer-

vient to our becoming acquainted with the ſuperlative worth of virtue, by a compariſon of thoſe evils which afflict the vicious ſoul; not that evils originate on this account, but, as it was previouſly obſerved, reaſon, the artificer of the world, applied them to the beſt advantage; but to be able to make evil things ſubſervient to good purpoſes is a proof of the greateſt poſſible ability. Reaſon is likewiſe able to uſe things which are produced formleſs to the generation of other forms; and we ought to reckon evil the perfect defect of good.

Divine reason, the exemplar of our reason

But it is neceſſary that a defect of good ſhould take place in this region of ſenſe, becauſe the good which it participates ſubſiſts in ſomething different from

Everything that is participated is participated according to the nature of the recipient

itſelf, and that ſomething which is different brings a defect of good, ſince that in which it reſides is not good.

On this account, as Plato ſays, it is impoſſible that evils can be entirely extirpated, becauſe ſome things poſſeſs a capacity of receiving good inferior to others; and others again are different from good, deriving the cauſe of their ſubſiſtence from thence, and becoming ſuch on account of their extreme diſtance from good; but to thoſe circumſtances which appear frequently to happen contrary to order and right, as when evil is the portion of the good, or good the lot of the evil, we may properly reply, that nothing evil can happen to the good, nor any thing good to the

evil. For if it ſhould be ſaid that many things contrary to nature happen to the good man, and many things conſonant to nature to the wicked, and how in this caſe can a right diſtribution of things ſubſiſt? we anſwer, that if what is according to nature neither adds any thing of felicity to the good, nor takes away any thing of depravity from the evil, and what is againſt nature takes away nothing from the good, of what conſequence is it whether the one ſubſiſts in preference to the other? For though an evil man ſhould be beautiful in his body, but a good man deformed, yet, as far as poſſible, ſtudy the beautiful and fit in all his actions, we ought not to blame the order of things, but eſteem ſuch a diſpenſation as the work of the moſt bene-

ficent providence. But if it is ſaid that it is by no means proper that the evil ſhould be the lords and rulers of cities, but the good in a ſtate of ſervitude; for though circumſtances of this kind add nothing to the evil or the good, yet an evil ruler muſt commit the greateſt wickedneſs and injuſtice; and that, beſides this, the evil conquer in battle, and commit the moſt baſe and barbarous actions on their unhappy captives; for all theſe circumſtances compel us to doubt how they can ſubſiſt under the dominion of an all-wiſe providence; for though he who operates ought in the execution of his work to look to the whole, yet it is neceſſary that the parts alſo ſhould purſue that which is moſt expedient to their natures, eſpecially

where they are animated and endued with rational powers. Laſtly it is probable that providence extends itſelf through all things, and that its peculiar employment is to leave nothing forſaken and neglected; in conſequence of which, if we allow that the whole world depends on intellect, and that its power is diffuſed through the univerſe, we ſhould endeavour to demonſtrate after what manner particulars are rightly adminiſtered.

Objections

In the firſt place then, we ought not to be ignorant that when we inquire after beauty in things which are mixed, we ſhould not minutely ſeek after the beauty of the parts from which they are compoſed, nor expect to find pri-

mary natures in ſuch as are ſubſequent and ſecondary; but ſince the world is endued with a body, we muſt allow ſomething accidental to the world from the nature of body; we muſt likewiſe reſpect its participation of reaſon, as far as its mixed condition can admit, and reckon it conſtituted ſufficiently good, if nothing is wanting which it is able to receive. Juſt as if any one ſhould contemplate the moſt beautiful man upon earth, yet it is not proper he ſhould think that he is the ſame with man in the intelligible world, but he ſhould eſteem the work of the artificer ſufficiently complete if this man, though inveſted with fleſh, nerves, and bones, is yet comprehended by reaſon, and ſo far rendered beautiful as reaſon, diffuſing

Ideal Man

a Divine reason

itſelf over matter, is able to effect. This being granted, let us now reply to the preceding inquiries; for, perhaps, by a ſolution of theſe doubts, we ſhall be able to diſcover the admirable gift of providence, and the wonderful power which is the artificer of this world.

Concerning the inherent actions of ſouls, which are to be placed in the ſouls themſelves when they act baſely, as when ſuch as are unjuſt hurt others that are juſt; or as when the unjuſt moleſt the unjuſt, (unleſs perhaps ſome one ſhould aſſign providence as the cauſe of their depravity) is it proper to require of providence the reaſon of the deed? or ought we not rather to refer the cauſe into the election of the ſouls themſelves?

For it is ſaid that ſouls ought to have their peculiar motions, and in the preſent world no longer exiſt as ſouls alone, but as animals: beſides it is not wonderful, ſince this is the caſe, that they ſhould poſſeſs a life aptly correſpondent to their condition; for we muſt not ſuppoſe that becauſe the world *was* they came hither, but prior to the world, conſidered as an effect, they reckoned they ſhould ſhortly, as it were, take care of mundane concerns, become the cauſes of their ſupport, and govern the fluctuating empire of bodies: in whatever manner theſe operations take place, whether by preſiding they attribute ſomething of themſelves to the ſubjects they command, or by immerſion into matter, or in ſome other way, become

thus connected with body, however this may happen, providence is not to be blamed. But when any one conſiders the dominion of providence by drawing a compariſon between the evil and the good, and reflects that the good are poor but the evil rich, and that for the moſt part the baſeſt of mankind poſſeſs more than the neceſſities of human nature require, and beſides this rule over kingdoms and empires with arbitrary ſway, what will ſuch a one ſay? Perhaps he will doubt whether providence extends as far as to the earth. But ſince all things elſe are conſtituted according to reaſon, we have a ſufficient teſtimony that providence deſcends to the earth; for animals and plants participates of reaſon, ſoul, and life. But it may be

ſaid, providence extends thus far, but does not exerciſe dominion: however, ſince the univerſe is one animal, an aſſertion of this kind is juſt as if any one ſhould ſay, that the head and face of a man are conſtituted by nature, that is, by a ſupervening ſeminal reaſon, but that the other parts of the body aroſe from fortuitous or neceſſary cauſes, and on this account become ſecondary and inferior; or elſe proceed from the imbecility of nature. But ſurely it is neither holy nor pious, to allow that even theſe are not beautifully diſpoſed, and by this means to accuſe both the artificer and his work.

It remains therefore that we inquire after what manner all theſe are rightly

adminiſtered and preſerve an invariable order; or if this is denied, it is proper to explain the mode of their conſtitution, or rather to ſhew that they are not badly diſpoſed. The ſupreme parts of every animal, I mean the head and face, are more beautiful than the parts ſituated in the middle and extreme. With reſpect to the univerſal diſtribution of things men are in the middle and inferior ranks: but in an order more ſublime, the celeſtial regions, with the gods they contain, and theſe gods contain the greateſt part of the world, and the heavens themſelves confined in circular bounds: but earth is, as it were, the centre of the univerſe, and ranks among the number of ſtars. Many are apt to wonder that man ſhould live unjuſtly, becauſe

they conſider him as a being highly venerable in the univerſe, as if there was nothing more completely wiſe; but in reality man is only the medium between gods and brutes, and verges in ſuch a manner to each, that ſome men become more ſimilar to the divinities, and others to brutes, while the many preſerve an equal condition between both. Thoſe therefore, who by their depravity approach to the condition of brutes, ſeize thoſe who exiſt in the middle ranks, and overpower them with ſuperior force, but the vanquiſhed are in this caſe better than the conquerors; they are, however, overcome by ſubordinate natures, ſo far as they are themſelves ſubordinate, deſtitute of good, and incapable of reſiſtance. If, therefore, we ſuppoſe that a

number of boys well exerciſed and ſkilled in corporeal accompliſhments, but endued with ſouls baſe and uninformed, ſhould in the art of wreſtling vanquiſh thoſe who are equally unexerciſed in their bodies and ſouls, ſhould ſeize their food and ſtrip them of their ſoft effeminate garments, is there any thing in this caſe which appears hard, or ridiculous? Can it be ſhewn why it is not right that the Legiſlator ſhould permit ſuch to ſuffer the juſt puniſhments of an ignorant and luxurious life? Since, though previouſly acquainted with the nature of the Gymnaſium, through uncultivation and effeminacy, they have ſo neglected the cultivation of themſelves, as to become like delicate lambs the prey of voracious wolves. To ſuch,

therefore, who perpetrate evil of this kind, the firſt puniſhment which impends is, that they become wolves and unhappy men; and afterwards a puniſhment is preſcribed proportionate to the nature of their offences. For thoſe who become evil are not ſuffered to die, but always follow a former ſtate of being, ſuch as is agreeable to reaſon and nature; things inferior, ſuch as are inferior, and things ſuperior ſuch as are ſuperior: but not after the manner of the Gymnaſium, or wreſtling place; where nothing but ſport is to be found. For it is neceſſary after the youth increaſe in years and ſtature, and have unſkilfully grappled with each other, that they ſhould both be armed and aſſume more excellent manners than they poſſeſſed in the

ſchool of wreſtling. And now ſome of theſe are unarmed, and are conſequently conquered by the armed; where indeed it is not neceſſary that a god himſelf ſhould contend for the imbecile, incapable of war. For the law ſays, that ſafety is to be expected not from impotent wiſhes, but by fortitude in battle. Nor is it fit that thoſe who ſimply deſire ſupport, but that ſuch as cultivate the earth ſhould collect its fruits, nor that thoſe ſhould be well who neglect the care of health; nor ought it to be matter of grievous complaint, if the evil gather a multiplicity of fruit, through a ſedulous attention to agriculture. Beſides, it is ridiculous to perform every other thing pertaining to life according to our own peculiar determination,

though not in ſuch a manner as may be pleaſing to the divinities; but to require ſafety alone from the gods, at the ſame time neglecting the means by which the gods order mankind to be preſerved. We may likewiſe add, that death to theſe is far better than a life of ſuch a kind as the laws of the univerſe are unwilling ſhould be endured. If, therefore, while things contrary to order and rectitude take place through the perſeverance of folly and vice, divinity ſhould remain ſilent, and vengeance perpetually ſleep, providence might be accuſed of negligence, as if it permitted the dominion of depraved natures. But the wicked alone rule with arbitrary ſway, through the cowardice and indolence of the natures ſubject to their command;

for this is more juſt than to accuſe providence of neglect.

But it is by no means neceſſary that providence ſhould operate in ſuch a manner as to leave us entirely paſſive, for if providence is all things, and alone the efficient, it will no longer be providence; for who can it any longer reward or puniſh? ſince divinity alone would be every where, and all things. But the truth is, that divinity is indeed preſent, and inclines itſelf to every one, yet not ſo as to deſtroy the eſſence of any thing: but, for example, when it approaches to man, preſerves that in him which conſtitutes his eſſence; but this is no other than defending vital beings by the immutable laws of provi-

dence, and this preſervation conſiſts in acting agreeably to the injunctions of law. But this law ordains that a good life ſhall be the portion of the good after death, but to the evil the contrary; but it is impious to ſuppoſe that the evil, who alone confide in indolent wiſhes, ſhould be conſtantly guarded by the preſence of divinity: nor is it proper that the gods, by an intermiſſion of their own peculiar happy life, ſhould diſpenſe particular employments to the wicked correſponding to their baſe deſires; ſince it is even improper that good men, leading a life ſuperior to the common condition of humanity, ſhould be employed in the government of ſubordinate affairs. The human genus, therefore, is indeed an animal, yet not the moſt excellent of

all things, but obtaining and chuſing a middle order, at the ſame time, by the care of a beneficent providence, is not ſent to be deſtroyed in this inferior ſtation, but is aſſiduouſly recalled to a more exalted ſtate of being, by every machine which divinity employs, for the purpoſe of giving ſtrength to its virtue and goodneſs. Hence it is, that the human kind never loſes the rational faculty, but participates, though not in the higheſt degree, of wiſdom and intellect, and art and juſtice, each of which men mutually exerciſe among themſelves; ſo that thoſe who treat others injuriouſly, think they act juſtly; for they judge every one worthy of puniſhment whom they intentionally injure. In ſhort, man is as beautiful a work as poſ-

ſible in his preſent condition, and is ſo conſtituted in the univerſal ſeries of exiſtence, as to enjoy a better portion than every other terrene animal; ſince no wiſe and prudent being would blame other animals inferior to man, when he conſiders how much they confer to the ornament of the earth: for it would ſurely be ridiculous to detract any thing from the nature of animals becauſe they ſometimes devour men; as if it was proper that men ſhould live, in perfect ſecurity, a life of ſoft eaſe and inglorious ſloth. But it is neceſſary, to the order of the whole, that even ſavage animals ſhould exiſt, whoſe utility is partly ſelf-evident, and is partly brought to light by the future circulations of time; ſo that nothing either relative to themſelves

or to man appears to be in vain. But he who blames the diſpoſition of things becauſe many animals are of a ruſtic nature, is alone worthy of laughter; becauſe this is even the province of men; and though many are not obedient to the will of man, but reluctantly obey, we ought not to wonder at their reſiſtance.

But if men are unwillingly evil, neither thoſe who injure others, nor thoſe who are injured, can be juſtly accuſed; indeed if there is a neceſſity that men ſhould be evil, whether from the celeſtial motion, or from a certain principle producing in an orderly ſeries all that is conſequent, evil muſt be naturally produced: but if reaſon is the artificer of

all things, how can it be excuſed from acting unjuſtly? Perhaps it may be ſaid that the evil are not ſpontaneouſly guilty, becauſe the crime itſelf is not voluntary; but this does not prohibit their acting from themſelves, for guilt is the reſult of their operations, or they could not be guilty if they were not the authors of ſuch actions. If it be ſaid they are evil from neceſſity, this is not ſolely to be admitted externally, but becauſe they are guilty from a certain common condition. And with reſpect to what is ſaid of the celeſtial motion, we muſt not allow ſo much to its influence as if nothing remained in our power; for if all things are produced externally, they muſt certainly be produced in ſuch a manner as their authors pleaſe; on which account,

mankind can have no ability of acting contrary to their determinations, and will be no longer impious, if the gods are the perpetrators of all that is evil and baſe, though in reality this proceeds from the conduct of mankind themſelves. But a principle being once given, conſequences will every where be connected with their cauſes: and mankind are the principles of their actions, and are therefore ſpontaneouſly moved to whatever is honeſt and good, which principle is itſelf ſpontaneous and free.

But it may be aſked, whether particulars are not produced from certain phyſical neceſſities and conſequences, and are, as far as poſſible, the beſt? Perhaps not in this manner, but ruling reaſon* Intellect or Divine reason.

itſelf, produced all things, and willed them in that order in which they now exiſt, ſo as rationally to produce whatever is called evil, being unwilling that all things ſhould be equally good: for as the artificer in the formation of an animal does not make every part an eye, ſo neither does reaſon faſhion every thing a god; but ſome things it appoints in the order of gods, and others of a following nature in the rank of dæmons, and after theſe men and ſubordinate animals: nor is it on this account to be accuſed of envy, ſince it operates as reaſon poſſeſſing an intellectual variety. But we who repine at the order of things, are affected in a manner ſimilar to thoſe who, unſkilled in the art of painting, condemn the painter, becauſe

The Artificer is full of all poſſible Ideas and conſequently its production the Univerſe muſt be replete with the moſt abundant Variety of Forms.

the colours of his piece are not every where equally beautiful and bright; while the painter, in the mean time, has aſſigned to every part that which is proper and the beſt. Cities too, that are well inſtituted, are not equally diſpoſed in all things: beſides, who that is not deſtitute of underſtanding, would blame a comedy or a tragedy becauſe all its characters are not heroes, but ſometimes a ſervant, or a clown, with a ruder voice, is introduced, performing his part? But the poem would not be beautiful if the ſubordinate characters were taken away, ſince it is complete alone from the reſult of the parts.

If, then, reaſon, entirely accommodating itſelf to matter, produced all things,

conſiſting, as they appear, of diſſimilar parts, from the omniform nature of reaſon, the artificer, certainly that which is generated can have nothing ſo formed more beautiful than itſelf: and ſince it is not fit that reaſon ſhould be compoſed from all things perfectly conformable and ſimilar, it cannot be blamed, becauſe, though all things, it is in every part different. But if it is ſaid, after what manner can reaſon act rightly if it introduces other ſouls external to itſelf into the world, and compels them, contrary to their nature, to co-operate with the mundane fabrication, and many of them to paſs into an inferior condition? We reply, it is proper to believe that ſouls themſelves are, as it were, parts of this univerſal reaſon, and that reaſon

There must be the most abundant variety with the most perfect union in the Universe. such could not be the progeny of Goodness itself.

They all subsist together but their energies are unfolded by the revolutions of time.

does not harmonize things ſubordinate to the world by previous production, but when it is convenient and proper, diſpoſes them, already produced, according to the dignity of their nature. Beſides, that argument in favour of providence is not to be deſpiſed which teaches us not always to regard the preſent appearance of things, but to reſpect their paſt and future circulations; for by this means a juſt retribution ſubſiſts, while an exchange is made from unjuſt and tyrannical maſters in a former life to ſervants in a following exiſtence; and from the abuſe of riches at preſent to the want of them hereafter; in which caſe poverty will not be uſeleſs to the good. In like manner, he who has unjuſtly deſtroyed any one, ſhall be in a

ſimilar manner unjuſtly ſlain—Unjuſtly with reſpect to him who is the cauſe of his deſtruction, but juſtly as far as pertains to him who is deſtroyed. Indeed it is not right to believe that any one is a ſervant by a blind diſtribution of things, nor that any one is taken captive by chance, or without reaſon is violently aſſaulted, but that in a former life he perpetrated what he ſuffers for in the preſent: ſo that he who formerly deſtroyed his mother, ſhall afterwards be born a woman and be ſlain by her ſon; and he who has raviſhed a woman, ſhall afterwards be changed into a woman and be raviſhed. And this is the meaning of the oracle of Adraſtria, or the inevitable power of divine law; for an inſtitution of this kind is doubtleſs

Adraſtria, true judgement and juſtice, and admirable wiſdom. Indeed it is lawful to conjecture, from the daily appearances in the world, that ſuch an order always ſubſiſts, where doubtleſs a certain order of this kind runs through all things, even ſuch as are leaſt and moſt inconſiderable, and a wonderful art is every where evinced, not alone in things divine, but even in ſuch as from their diminutive nature may be judged unworthy the notice of providence. For in the moſt abject of animals there is an artificial and ſtupendous variety, and the ſkill of divinity propagates itſelf even to the very leaves and fruit of plants; where the beauty of the forms, and the aptneſs and facility with which they flouriſh, may properly excite our

admiration; ſince, without any labour of nature, they germinate in ſuch variety in an unceaſing circle of generation and decay, while things ſuperior are not conducted in an order entirely ſimilar to theſe. Whatever therefore exiſts by alternate changes of condition is not raſhly tranſmuted, nor aſſumes a variety of forms from the arbitrary power of chance, but in ſuch a manner as it is proper for the power of divinity to act; for every thing divine energizes in ſuch a manner as the peculiar nature of divinity requires, which is ever according to its own exalted eſſence. But its eſſence unfolds in its operations the beautiful and juſt, for unleſs theſe abide in a divine eſſence they cannot any where ſubſiſt.

Order therefore is ſo inſtituted according to intellect, as to abide without the diſcurſive power of reaſon, and ſo abides, that if any one was able to exerciſe his reaſon in the moſt perfect manner, he would be beyond meaſure aſtoniſhed to find the whole ſo conſtituted that his reaſon cannot conceive any other diſpoſition of things more orderly than what particular natures continually evince; which always poſſeſs more of an intellectual form than the order of our reaſon can either conceive or produce. In every kind of things therefore which exiſt, it is not lawful to accuſe reaſon, the great efficient cauſe, unleſs ſome one ſhould think it neceſſary that every thing ſhould be produced eternal, like intelligible natures, requiring an abun-

dant accumulation of good, and not thinking the form attributed to every thing of itſelf ſufficient: juſt as if he ſhould blame nature in the formation of man becauſe ſhe did not give him horns for his defence, not conſidering that reaſon is neceſſarily diffuſed through all things, but in ſuch a manner that leſſer things are contained in ſuch as are greater, and parts in the whole, which conſequently muſt be unequal to the whole, or they would no longer be parts. Every thing indeed ſupreme is all things, which is not the caſe with particulars inferior and ſubordinate; ſo that man, conſidered as a part, cannot be all that is perfect and fair. And if at any time ſomething is found in certain parts which is not itſelf a part,

He who requires all things to be equal, takes away the subsistence of parts which are subordinate to wholes

Wholes are perfect & fair — wholes are prior to parts — —

through this it likewiſe becomes an *all*. Nor is it requiſite that every particular conſidered as an individual ſhould poſſeſs the higheſt degree of virtue, or it could no longer be called with propriety a part. Nor muſt it be ſaid that a part adorned with a high degree of dignity and excellence detracts, as it were, through envy from the whole, for it produces a more beautiful whole in proportion to its ſuperior dignity of excellence; ſince it becomes beautiful ſo far as it is ſimilar to the whole, and is at the ſame time ſo ordained, that in man, conſidered according to his preſent ſituation, ſomething beams forth to view, like ſtars which glitter in the divine heaven. So that we muſt conceive that dæmons and men reſemble large and

So man when he exerciſes according to intellect becomes beautiful, because he then approaches to a ſimilitude with Divinity

beautiful ſtatues, whether we ſuppoſe them animated or faſhioned by Vulcanian art, decorated in the face and breaſt with ſplendid ſtars, and ſo diſpoſed as properly to produce the gracefulneſs of the whole.

Particulars, therefore, conſidered in themſelves, appear to be rightly adminiſtered, but the mutual connection of theſe, as well of things which are produced as of thoſe in perpetual generation, is the ſource of doubt and objection; at one time reſpecting the mutual voracity of brute animals, and at another time the oppoſition of men againſt each other: likewiſe from that perpetual war which can neither be ſuppreſſed nor be eaſily borne, eſpecially if reaſon, the

artificer of the world, deſigned all this ſhould take place, and it is ſaid every thing is thus beautifully diſpoſed. For to thoſe who urge ſuch objections the reaſon will no longer be ſufficient which affirms that as much as poſſible all things are in a good condition of being, and that matter is the cauſe of every ſubordinate nature, and of the impoſſibility that evil ſhould be radically deſtroyed; ſince it is neceſſary things ſhould be thus conſtituted for the beſt: nor does matter by its approach (it may be ſaid) poſſeſs dominion, but rather, reaſon will be, according to this hypotheſis, the cauſe of matter. Reaſon, therefore, is the principle of all things, and whatever is produced is the reſult of its energy,

whether riſing to perfection or tending to decay.

What neceſſity then is there, you will ſay, of that perpetual and natural war which ſubſiſts among animals and men? We may reply, that perhaps the mutual deſtructions of animals are neceſſary becauſe they are certain viciſſitudes requiſite to the permanency of the ſpecies, which could not continue if no one was deſtroyed. And if they periſh in a proper time, ſo that utility to others may ariſe from their diſſolution, what reaſon is there for complaint? But what if thoſe which are devoured in this life revive again in another? Juſt as in the ſcene of a play, where one of the actors apparently dies, but ſhortly after changes

his dreſs, and aſſuming the appearance of a different perſon, returns to the ſcene? But perhaps ſome one may ſay, that the death in this inſtance is only fictitious; but if to die is only to change body, no otherwiſe than ſhifting a garment in a ſcene, or if death is an entire deſertion of body, like the final exit in a comedy from the play, where nevertheleſs he who departs will hereafter return to the play, what evil can this mutual commutation of animals produce? which is indeed much better than if they had never been born; for then there would be nothing but a total blindneſs and impotence of life; but now, ſince there is abundant life in the univerſe, it produces and varies all things in life; nor can it reſtrain it-

ſelf from continually producing beautiful animals, like ludicrous phantoms particularly grateful to the view.— But the arms which men mutually employ againſt each other, ſince they are mortal, and contend in a becoming order, like thoſe who ſport by dancing in armour, plainly declare that all the ſtudies of men are mere ſports, and that diſſolution is by no means to be accounted dreadful and hard. So that thoſe who are ſuddenly ſlain in battle only anticipate future death in old age, by paſſing away more ſwiftly and returning again. And thoſe who are deprived of their fortunes by the hand of violence, may eaſily perceive that they were not formerly their own, and that the unjuſt detainers of them are to be

derided for the poſſeſſion, ſince they in their turn will be ſtripped of them by others: and even though they might remain ſecure from rapine, yet the poſſeſſion will be worſe than the loſs of him from whom they were violently ſeized. We ought therefore to contemplate the ſlaughter and deſtruction of cities, the rapine and prey, like the ſcenes in a theatre, as nothing more than certain tranſmutations and alternate changes of figures; and weeping and diſtreſs every where as deluſive and fictitious. For in the particular acts of human life, it is not the interior ſoul and the true man, but the exterior ſhadow of the man alone, which laments and weeps, performing his part on the earth as in a more ample and extended ſcene, in

The fashion of this world passeth away

How contemptible human pursuits, when viewed with a Philosophic eye.

which many ſhadows of ſouls and phantom ſcenes appear.

Such then are the works of a man ſolely converſant with a life inferior and external, and who does not perceive that he only trifles, as it were, in his moſt ſerious laments; for the worthy man alone ſeriouſly applies himſelf to concerns worthy of ſtudy, but every other man is nothing more than a phantom and a trifle; though ſuch as theſe act ſeriouſly in ludicrous concerns, being ignorant at the ſame time what things are truly worthy of ſtudy, and in what manner they are to be ſtudied, and are on this account highly ridiculous and abſurd. But if any one trifling with theſe ſhould ſimilarly ſuffer, he

would acknowledge himſelf engaged among the plays of children, laying aſide the proper perſon with which he is inveſted: as if Socrates was to play, he would certainly only play in his external, and not in his inward and true ſelf. And beſides this it is proper to remember, that we muſt not conclude the preſent appearances evil becauſe of the multiplicity of lamentations and complaints, ſince boys in things which are not evil weep and lament.

If theſe things then are really ſo, it may be aſked, how evil can any longer exiſt? and where injuſtice and error are to be found? For after what manner, if all things are adminiſtered according to perfect rectitude and order, can thoſe

who act, act unjuſtly and deviate from what is right? And how can thoſe be unhappy who neither act unjuſtly nor wander from truth? Beſides, why are ſome things called according to nature and others contrary to nature? Since whatever is produced or operates paſſes through exiſtence in a certain natural order. Again, is it poſſible on this ſuppoſition there can be any impiety againſt Divinity? ſince in this caſe the artificer and his work may be compared to a poet inſerting among his fables a mimic reviling and mocking the poet himſelf? In order to a ſolution of theſe doubts, we ſhall endeavour to explain what reaſon is in a more explicit manner, and to prove the perfect rectitude of its nature. Reaſon, therefore, is as follows;

for we ſhould dare to declare its nature, ſince we may, perhaps, by this means, obtain the end of our inveſtigation.—Reaſon, then, I ſay, is neither ſincere intellect, nor intellect itſelf, nor the genus of pure ſoul; but depending from this, and, as it were, a ſplendour beaming from intellect and ſoul; from a ſoul affected according to intellect: ſo that reaſon is generated from theſe two as a life, as it were, ever poſſeſſing in itſelf thought perfectly tranquil. But all life is energy, even ſuch as is the moſt abject and vile; an energy not like that of fire, but an energy of ſuch a nature, that where no ſenſe is preſent, the motion is far from being raſh and fortuitous. But whatever participates of reaſon ever preſent, is on a ſudden rationally affected,

Knowledge subsist according to the nature of that wch knows, not according to the nature of the thing known - Suppose Intellect. its knowledge of a sensible thing will be in an intellectual & not in a sensible manner - but in participations - that wch is participated, subsists according to the nature of the participant - not according to the nature of that wch confers.

that is, becomes formed, as far as energy according to life is able to form, and moves in a manner correſpondent to its participation of form. Hence its energy is artificial, like one who is moved in a dance; for the dance is thus ſimilar to artificial life; and he is moved by art, and thus moves in the dance becauſe life itſelf is in a manner art of ſuch a kind. And theſe things we have advanced, that we may more plainly underſtand the nature of every kind of life. This reaſon, therefore, proceeding from one intellect and one life, and poſſeſſing plenitude from both, is neither one life nor one certain intellect, nor is it every where full, nor does it impart itſelf to its participants wholly and univerſally: but ſince it poſſeſſes in itſelf parts mu-

tually oppoſed, and on this account indigent, it certainly unfolds the origin of war and ſedition, and ſo is *one all* if it is not one; for being made an enemy to itſelf through its parts, it is one and a friend, in the ſame manner as in a tragic or a comic play, there is one reaſon of the whole, in itſelf containing many battles; the fable in the mean time, reducing all the diſſonant parts into one conſent, and forming a regular diſpoſition of all the battles. So with reſpect to the world, from one univerſal reaſon the ſtrife of things diſtant and diſagreeing is deduced. Hence whoever aſſimilates the world to harmony reſulting from oppoſing ſounds, ſhould inquire why in the proportions themſelves things repugnant are contained: if then in

musical modulation the harmonic reasons or proportions produce sounds acute and grave and conspire into one; since the reasons of harmony are contained in harmony itself, as parts in a greater reason; in a similar manner we may behold contraries amicably blended in the universe; the white and the black; the hot and the cold; likewise animals winged, and without wings; wanting or endued with feet; rational and irrational; while, in the mean time, all are parts of one universal animal; and the universe is homologous to itself, and is composed from parts at strife with each other, but according to reason, forming an harmonious whole. It is therefore necessary that this one reason should be one from the conjunction of reasons contrary and not

Simple notes ~~to be~~ Harmonic notes sounded by themselves are discordant, harsh & offend the ears — but arranged in either harmony or melody both are capable of affecting as well as delighting the mind — so contraries of w^h the Universe is composed, are harmonious with reference to the whole

similar; so that such an opposition conduces to its constitution of every essence; for unless it was many and various it could not be all things, and it could not be reason: but reason is different considered in respect to itself, and the greatest difference appears to be contrariety. If reason then is something different, and that which is different is productive of something, that which it produces must certainly be more different than itself; and consequently whatever is the extremity of its productions must necessarily be of a contrary nature: and reason will be perfect if it causes itself to be not only a certain difference, but a multitude of contrary natures.

Since reason therefore is primarily

Unless there was something so partially considered was evil, nature could not be perfect - as she would not be in possession of all possible things - of w^h she is evidently replete.

^ as every effect is inferior to its cause.

what its effect is ſecondarily, its productions will be more or leſs contrary to each other in proportion to their diſtance from their ſource. Indeed this ſenſible world is leſs one than reaſon, its artificer, and is, on this account, endued with a nature more various, and replete with contraries. Beſides, the deſire of life is more vehement, and the love more ardent, by which particulars are wrapped into one. But lovers often deſtroy the objects of love through the avidity of peculiar good, when ſuch ſubjects are obnoxious to corruption; beſides, the natural love of a part to the whole draws every thing within the ſphere of its attraction to the whole. Hence both good and evil are led through contraries in a beautiful order,

It is true of every cause — wch operates essentially

How distant then are we from the great source & principle of things — for in reality we are the dreggs of the Universe — which is truly one and contains in itself all possible multitude.

by an art, as it were, ſimilar to that of one leaping in a dance, of which we affirm the one part to be good and the other to be evil, and ſo the whole to be beautifully diſpoſed. But they will no longer appear to any one to be evil; and perhaps nothing hinders, on this hypotheſis, that ſome particulars may be evil; though it will follow from hence that they are not evil from themſelves. Perhaps alſo, pardon is to be granted to the evil, unleſs reaſon itſelf determines to whom pardon is to be granted, and to whom not. But reaſon ſo operates that ſhe is not ignorant of ſuch as are evil, and conſequently determines that the wicked, as ſuch, are not to be pardoned. And if one part of reaſon is a good man, and another an

evil one, the evil forms the greater part. So that the conſtitution of the univerſe reſembles that of a play, where the poet appoints ſome parts for the actors, but uſes others according to their peculiar nature: for the poet is not the cauſe that one is firſt in ability in the play, another ſecond, and again that another ranks as the third; but diſtributing the reaſons pertaining to each, he afterwards aſſigns an order perfectly accommodated to every one. Hence a place is deſtined to each, as well good as evil, in a manner moſt becoming and fit. Each therefore proceeds according to nature and reaſon in the part deſtined to each, in a becoming manner, obtaining the place which he choſe; afterwards he pronounces and acts, at one time, works

and words which are profane, and at another ſuch as are contrary; for the players were affected in ſome particular mode previous to the drama into which they inſert their peculiar manners. In the dramatic ſcenes of men the poet diſtributes his reaſons to every act, while the power of performing well or ill entirely depends on the actors; for this province belongs tó them independent of the words of the poet. But in that true poem the world, that which men repeat according to their part, is adorned with ſoul poſſeſſing a forming nature: and as the players are decorated by the poet with peculiar characters, and are clothed either with ſaffron-coloured, or ragged garments, ſo, under the direction of reaſon, the great mundane poet,

perſonated ſoul is not left to the blind guidance of chance; for ſouls are introduced on the ſtage of the world according to reaſon, and are allotted characters accommodated to each, in ſuch a manner, that the mundane tragedy or comedy may be beautifully performed. It likewiſe introduces itſelf into the drama in ſuch a manner as accords with univerſal reaſon, and afterwards pronounces certain actions, and whatever elſe the ſoul performs from its natural diſpoſition, after the manner of ſome particular ſong. And as the voice or figure of the actors is of itſelf beautiful or baſe, and is either the ſource of gracefulneſs to the poem, or mingles with it ſome defect of voice, and yet does not make the play different from what it was be-

fore, though it appears by this means defective; but the poet, who is the author of the drama, performing the office of a good judge, rejects one of the performers, blaming him according to his demerit, but promotes another to greater honours, and, if he has it in his power, to a more excellent act, but another if poſſible to one that is inferior;—in the ſame manner ſoul, entering into this univerſal poem the world, becomes a part of its playful ſcenes, and brings with itſelf the ability of performing its part properly or amiſs. In its entrance too it is annexed to the order of the reſt, and ſince every other nature is allotted a part diſtinct from ſoul and its peculiar duties, it is deſervedly rewarded with honour, or puniſhed with diſgrace.

Beſides, to the actors in this mundane play there is allotted a much greater ſcope for exertion, as conſtituted in a place more ample than the meaſure of a ſcene; eſpecially ſince the author of the univerſe gave them authority, and a greater power, for the purpoſe of procuring many ſpecies of manners, geſtures, and places. Souls therefore define the meaſure of ignominy and honour from the variety of manners which they exhibit; where the habitations of each are accommodated to their particular manners, ſo as to harmonize with the reaſon of the univerſe, accommodating to every one his ſtation according to the deciſions of juſtice: juſt as every chord in a harp is ſtretched in a proper and convenient place, and in an order

beſt adapted for the reaſon of ſounding, and in ſuch a manner as the power of each ſupplies. For thus the beautiful and becoming flouriſhes in the whole when every part is diſpoſed where it is proper, ſounding indeed diſſonant in darkneſs, and in Tartarus: ſince among theſe it is beautiful thus to ſound. Hence the whole is at laſt beautiful, not if every thing is as a ſtone, but if every part conferring a proper tone rightly conduces to one entire harmony; that which is but a part indeed ſounding life, yet more debile, inferior, and remote from perfection; as in a pipe one voice alone is not ſufficient, but beſides this a leſſer and more debile one is required, to the perfect conſonance of the pipe; becauſe the melody is divided into un-

The extremity of things

equal parts, and the ſingle tones are unequal amongſt themſelves, but one perfect harmony reſults from the union of all: for univerſal reaſon is one, but is diſtributed into things not equal; from whence ariſes the diverſity of ſituations, ſome better and others worſe, and the agreement of ſouls unequal with places that are unequal; correſponding to the diſſimilitude of a pipe, or ſome other muſical inſtrument. Souls likewiſe reſide in places correſponding to their variety, framing indeed peculiar notes in every ſituation, but harmonizing as well with particular places as the univerſe; ſo that even the tune which a ſoul ſings diſcordant to herſelf is melodious to the whole; and what happens to particular ſouls contrary to nature, happens according

to nature to the univerſe: nor does the leſſer tone harmonize leſs with the whole than the greater; nor does he who ſings more unaptly by himſelf render the whole on this account more diſſonant; as a vicious plebeian (if we may uſe another example) does not render a city worſe which is inſtituted by laws equitable and juſt; for a man of this kind is often neceſſary in the city, and is rightly placed with reſpect to the order of the whole.

But ſouls are better or worſe, partly becauſe unequal from the beginning, and partly from other cauſes; for theſe in a competent proportion correſpond with the reaſon of the univerſe, ſince both in reaſon and in the genus of ſouls

a diſtribution is made into unequal parts. But it is neceſſary to conſider ſecond and third orders of ſouls; and again that the ſame ſoul does not always act according to the ſame parts of itſelf. But we muſt again conſider the ſubject as follows; for the preſent diſputation requires many things for the ſake of explication. Let us conſider, therefore, whether in this mundane play it is not neceſſary to introduce actors who pronounce ſomething of themſelves independent of the words of the poet; as if the writing of the poet was of itſelf imperfect, which the actors ſupply by filling thoſe places which perhaps the poet left vacant; or are they not rather parts of the poet, the author, who foreſaw what the actors would ſupply, that ſo he might be able

to connect the ſubſequent parts in a regular ſucceſſion? For all things which proceed ſucceſſively in the univerſe, and even purſue works that are evil, rightly conſiſt from reaſons, and are every where diſtributed according to reaſon; as when, in conſequence of adultery or a rape, children are produced in a natural order, and ſometimes, perhaps, men of the greateſt abilities and virtues; and when cities are ſubverted by the works of the evil, more excellent cities riſe out of the former ruins. If then this introduction of ſouls ſupplying the vacant parts is abſurd, and the works of theſe are both good and evil, does it not follow that we deprive reaſon of the authority of producing good, by taking entirely from it all communion with evil? What

likewiſe ſhould prevent our aſſerting that as the manners of the players make a part of the drama, ſo the actors in this mundane play make a part of that reaſon which flouriſhes every where in the univerſe, in which all that is honeſt or baſe is included; ſo that a progreſſion from reaſon takes place in the ſame manner as in the ſeveral actors of a play, by which this mundane ſyſtem becomes more perfect, and all things are comprehended in its embrace, and in reaſon, its great artificer? But, you will ſay, on what account do the effects of evil ſubſiſt? Beſides, on this ſuppoſition, nothing but more divine ſouls will be ſeen in the univerſe, but all will be parts of reaſon; and either all reaſons will be ſouls, or if this is denied, what cauſe can be aſ-

ſigned why ſome reaſons will be ſouls, but others reaſons only, when at the ſame time univerſal reaſon is a certain ſoul?

PLOTINUS

ON

NATURE, CONTEMPLATION,

AND

THE ONE.

PLOTINUS'.

ON

NATURE, CONTEMPLATION,

AND

THE ONE.

IF, previous to a ſerious inquiry into nature, we ſhould jocoſely, as it were, affirm, that all things deſire contemplation, and verge to this as their end, not only rational animals, but thoſe deſtitute of reaſon, the nature of plants, and earth, the mother of them all; likewiſe that all things purſue contemplation, as far as the natural capacity of

each permits, but that ſome things contemplate and purſue contemplation differently from others, ſome in reality and ſome by imitation beholding only the image; if we ſhould affirm all this, ſhall we not appear to advance a doctrine entirely new? Perhaps, if this were the caſe, we ſhall incur no danger while we trifle in our own concerns; or may we not ſay that we who trifle and joke in the preſent caſe contemplate? and that we and all others who joke and trifle perform this through a deſire of contemplation? So that it will appear, whether it is a boy or a man who trifles, or ſeriouſly ſtudies, the one ſtudies, and the other trifles and jokes, for the ſake of contemplation; as alſo that every action earneſtly tends to contemplation, ſuch as

are neceſſary protracting for a longer time ſpeculation to externals, but more liberal actions leading to it in a ſhorter time; and that both together operate through a deſire of ſpeculation—But this more opportunely afterwards. Let us now conſider what is the ſpeculation of earth, and trees, and plants, and after what manner we may be able to reduce that which is produced in theſe into the energy of ſpeculation; and laſtly, how nature, which is ſaid to be void of imagination and reaſon, poſſeſſes contemplation in herſelf, and yet operates from contemplation which ſhe does not poſſeſs.

That nature then is not endued with hands and feet, nor any inſtrument either

adventitious or allied to herſelf, but that matter is neceſſary, in which ſhe operates, and which ſhe reduces into form, is almoſt obvious to every one: nor is it to be thought that nature produces her work, as it were, by impelling and preſſing; for what impulſion or preſſure could effect various and omniform colours and figures? Since thoſe who form images out of wax, and by beholding a pattern are ſuppoſed to operate ſimilar to nature, could not produce colours, unleſs they procured theſe external to their work. It is therefore worth while to conſider whether, as among operators of ſuch arts, it is neceſſary ſomething ſhould remain within the ſoul, according to whoſe permanency they fabricate with their hands; in like manner there ſhould

be ſomething of this kind in nature, which is a certain permanent power, fabricating without the miniſtry of hands, the whole of which is permanent and fixed; for it does not require ſome parts of itſelf to abide and others to be moved, for matter is that which is there moved, but of nature nothing is in motion, or that which moves will not be the firſt mover, and conſequently will not be nature, but that which abides immoveable in the whole. But ſome one may object, that reaſon indeed remains immoveable, but that nature is different from reaſon and is moved; but if they ſpeak of the whole of nature, this alſo will be reaſon, but if a part of it is immoveable this alſo ſhall be reaſon; for it is neceſſary that nature ſhould be

Incorporeally

Thales is compoſed from matter and form is body

form, and not a compoſite from matter and form; for what need has nature of a cold or a hot matter? ſince matter, which is the ſubject of fabrication, brings theſe in its capacity, whether its nature is of this kind, or rather, previous to its aſſumption of quality, it is affected by reaſon: for it is not requiſite that fire ſhould approach, but reaſon, in order that matter may become fire, which is an evident argument that in animals and plants the ſeminal reaſons are effective of all things, and that nature is reaſon, which generates another reaſon as its offſpring, while it tranſmits ſomething to its ſubject, abiding in the mean time permanent in itſelf. Reaſon, therefore, extrinſically produced according to viſible form, is the laſt reaſon, generated,

An incorporeal intellectual power —

+ Vital incorporeal Emanations

as it were, in the ſhade of the firſt, deſtitute of life, and incapable of forming another reaſon; but reaſon endued with life, and which is, as it were, the ſiſter of that which fabricates form, and poſſeſſing the ſame power, generates that reaſon which is laſt in the effect. But after what manner does nature operate, and how by operating can ſhe be ſaid to contemplate? Indeed if ſhe operates as abiding, and abiding in herſelf, and is on this account reaſon, ſhe is alſo contemplation; for action is accuſtomed to be produced according to reaſon, at the ſame time being different from reaſon; but reaſon aſſiſting and preſiding over action is not action. If then it is not action, but reaſon, it is a certain contemplation. Now in all reaſons, that

which is the laſt proceeds from contemplation, and is called contemplation, becauſe by this it is generated and received; but all reaſons ſuperior to this differ one from another; and the one is not as nature but as ſoul, but the other is in nature, and is nature herſelf. But does nature operate from contemplation? From contemplation entirely. But what if after a certain manner ſhe contemplates herſelf? for ſhe is the effect of contemplation, and contemplative of ſomething. But in what manner does her contemplation take place? Indeed ſhe does not poſſeſs a ſpeculation proceeding from a diſcurſive reaſon, or a conſideration of her inherent forms: but why does ſhe never conſider theſe, ſince ſhe is a certain life, and reaſon, and

efficient capacity? Is it becauſe to conſider is not yet to poſſeſs? But if ſhe poſſeſſes theſe, becauſe poſſeſſing ſhe operates, ſo that to be what ſhe is, is the ſame as to operate, and ſuch as ſhe is, ſuch ſhe fabricates; but ſhe is a certain contemplation, and, as it were, ſpectacle or theorem, for ſhe is reaſon. As far therefore as ſhe is ſpeculation, and a ſpectacle, and reaſon, ſo far ſhe operates. Operation therefore appears to be a certain contemplation, *i. e.* it is the effect of contemplation; ſpeculation at the ſame time abiding and not operating by different modes, but becauſe contemplation being effective of different forms.

If Divinity framed the world by consideration, or reasoning, he could not contain in himself the cause of the Universe because, to consider is not yet to possess. Intirely incorporeal natures Essence is the same as Energy

But if any one ſhould aſk nature for whoſe ſake ſhe operates, if he wiſhes

to hear her ſpeak, ſhe would anſwer as follows: it is not fit you ſhould interrogate me, but it becomes you to underſtand in ſilence, even as I am ſilent, and not accuſtomed to ſpeak: but what is it you ſhould underſtand? this, in the firſt place, that whatever is produced is my ſpectacle, produced while I am ſilent, a ſpectacle naturally produced; and that I, who ſpring from a certain contemplation of this kind, poſſeſs a nature deſirous of beholding: hence that which retains in me the office of a ſpeculative power, produces a ſpectacle or theorem, in the ſame manner as the geometrician, from ſpeculating on his ſcience, deſcribes a variety of figures, yet the lines of bodies emanate from hence, not by my engraving them in matter, but drop, as

it were, from the energy of my contemplation: indeed an affection is conſtantly preſerved in me for my mother, and the ſources of my being, for they derive their origin from contemplation, and my generation is alſo deduced from ſpeculation, ſince while my parents, deſtitute of action and being reaſons greater and more exalted than myſelf, ſpeculate themſelves, I am produced. But what are we to underſtand by this ſpeech of nature? that nature herſelf is ſoul, produced from a ſoul more powerful and vivid, and which ever poſſeſſes in herſelf tranquil ſpeculation, neither verging to things ſuperior nor inferior to herſelf; ſo that ever abiding in her ſtate, as far as her nature permits, through knowledge and conſent, ſhe knows what is poſ-

terior to herſelf, and without any farther inquiry, produces an agreeable and ſplendid ſpectacle. And if any one is deſirous of aſſigning to nature a certain apprehenſion or ſenſation, he ought not to attribute to her a knowledge of the ſame kind as that of other beings, but in the ſame manner as if the knowledge of a man dreaming ſhould be compared with the perceptions of the vigilant: for contemplating her ſpectacle ſhe repoſes; a ſpectacle produced in herſelf, becauſe ſhe abides in and with herſelf, and becomes her own ſpectacle and a quiet contemplation, though more debile and obſcure; for the ſoul from which ſhe is produced is endued with a more efficacious perception, and nature is only the image of another's contem-

plation. On this account, what is generated by her is debile in the extreme, becauſe a debilitated ſpeculation produces a debile ſpectacle; and hence it is that men, who are by nature more debile for the purpoſes of contemplation, ruſh into action, which is nothing more than the ſhadow of ſpeculation and reaſon; for when the power of contemplation is wanting, and through the debility of the ſoul they are incapable of ſufficiently beholding a mental ſpectacle, feeling a void within of ſomething which they deſire to perceive, they fly to action, that by this means they may at leaſt diſcern the ſhade of a ſubſtance they could not behold with the eye of the mind. Indeed, we every where find that operation and action are either the

debility or the conſequence of contemplation; the debility indeed where nothing is poſſeſſed beſides operation, but the conſequence where an object of ſpeculation is poſſeſſed ſuperior to the produced work; for who bleſſed with a ſound underſtanding when capable of beholding truth itſelf would make it his principal ſtudy to purſue the image of truth? And the truth of this is evinced in boys naturally ſtupid and dull, who, from their incapacity for learning and contemplation, ruſh into mechanical actions and arts. Since then we have conſidered in what manner the fabrication of nature is a certain contemplation, let us next proceed to that ſoul which is ſuperior to nature; for the contemplation of this ſoul, its ingenuity, its deſire

of learning and inquiry, and beſides all this, a certain ſtimulus ariſing from its knowledge, produces a parturient and abundant fœcundity, ſo that becoming a ſpectacle throughout it generates another ſpectacle, in the ſame manner as art operates, when full of ſpeculative forms it produces, as it were, a ſmall art in a child, who poſſeſſes an image of all things, but in a different manner from his preceptor art; ſince he retains only obſcure and debile ſpectacles incapable from the beginning of aſſiſting themſelves. The rational and ſupreme part therefore of this ſoul abides on high, ever filled and illuſtrated with ſupernal good; but its other part participates of that which it participated from the firſt in the firſt participation; for life

always proceeds from life, ſince energy runs through all things, and is not abſent from any part of the univerſe, but in its progreſs it permits its prior part to abide in its priſtine ſtate; for if it entirely loſt its principal part, energy would no longer be every where, but only in that in which it ends: nor is energy in progreſſion equal to energy in a permanent ſtate. If then it is neceſſary energy ſhould be generated through all things, it is alſo neceſſary that no place ſhould be found where energy is not preſent: but prior energy is always different from that which is poſterior. Energy too proceeds either from contemplation or action, but firſt from contemplation before action had a being, for action could not be prior to contemplation. If this

x for ſo the effect must be prior to cause —

be the caſe, it is neceſſary that one energy ſhould be more debile than another, but that each ſhould be a contemplation; ſo that every action ſubſiſting according to contemplation, appears to be nothing elſe than a certain debile ſpeculation; for it is always neceſſary that whatever is generated ſhould be homogeneous, yet ſo as to become gradually more infirm and debile by its deſcent. Indeed all things proceed in a beautiful and quiet order, becauſe they do not require either contemplation or action extrinſically appearing. The intellectual ſoul of the world contemplates indeed a ſublime ſpectacle, and that which ſhe thus contemplates, becauſe it riſes higher than ſoul, generates that which is poſterior to itſelf, and thus contemplation begets

contemplation, ſo that neither has ſpeculation or ſpectacle any bound, and on this account they proceed through all things. For what ſhould hinder their diffuſion through all things? ſince in every ſoul there is the ſame ſpectacle; for it is not circumſcribed by magnitude, nor yet abides after the ſame manner in all, and conſequently does not ſubſiſt after the ſame manner in every part of the ſoul. Hence, according to Plato, the charioteer of the ſoul imparts to the horſes that which he ſees, which the horſes receive as deſirous of the things they perceive, for they do not receive the whole; becauſe if they operate according to deſire they operate for the ſake of what they deſire, and this is itſelf a ſpectacle and ſpeculation.

Action therefore takes place for the ſake of ſpeculation and the conſequent ſpectacle, on which account the end of all who act is contemplation; ſo that what they are not able to obtain by the right way of proceeding, they attempt to gain by a winding purſuit. The ſame takes place when following what they deſire, and which they wiſh to be preſent; not indeed preſent in ſuch a manner that they cannot recognize it, but that they may acknowledge the thing acquired and view it preſent in the ſoul, as ſituated there for the ſake of beholding; becauſe they ever act for the ſake of good, of a good not exiſting externally but in themſelves, thus conſtantly tend to the poſſeſſion of that good which ariſes from action. But where can this

Things desireable for their own sakes and such are objects of intellectual contemplation

good abide? certainly in the ſoul; ſo that action again returns into contemplation: for that which is received in the ſoul, which is a certain reaſon, what is it elſe but ſilent reaſon? and by how much the more it becomes reaſon by ſo much the more ſilent and the contrary; for then it acts quietly, and being full requires nothing farther: and contemplation conſtituted in a habit of this kind, intrinſically repoſes, from a perfect aſſurance of poſſeſſing. And by how much the more certain the aſſurance, by ſo much quieter the contemplation; which indeed rather reduces the ſoul into one, and on this account that which knows, as far as it knows, (for we are now treating the ſubject ſeriouſly) paſſes into one with the thing known; for if

they are two, this will be one thing and that another; and on this account it will appear to be ſomething adjacent, and this, which is twofold, will not as yet have contracted a true familiarity; as when reaſons reſiding in the ſoul are unprolific. And hence it is neceſſary that reaſon ſhould not be any thing external but united to the ſoul of the learner, till it finds that which is peculiar and allied to itſelf. The ſoul therefore, when ſhe becomes familiar to reaſon, produces and unfolds her latent reaſons into energy; for ſhe perceives what ſhe previouſly poſſeſſed, and promulgates it as if different from herſelf, and full of thought beholds that which is different as if ſhe herſelf was different, although ſhe is reaſon, and ſubſiſts as a ſubordi-

nate beholding a ſuperior intellect: for ſhe is not full, but deficient of that which is ſuperior, yet dwelling in quiet, ſhe beholds the things ſhe produces; for ſhe does not yet produce what ſhe has not received, but what ſhe produces ſhe tranſmits from a certain defect in conſideration, perceiving what ſhe poſſeſſes: but in actions ſhe accommodates her internal poſſeſſions to externals, and from her poſſeſſing more abundantly than nature ſhe poſſeſſes more quietly, and is on this account more ſpeculative. Again, becauſe ſhe does not perfectly poſſeſs ſhe is more deſirous of a perception of the thing beheld, and of a ſpeculation ariſing from diſcurſive conſideration; but when ſhe leaves her firſt habit and paſſes into another, by a ſubſequent

regreſs, ſhe again contemplates, having ſo far relinquiſhed a part of herſelf; but while the other habit abides ſhe has but little power to effect this in herſelf. Hence the worthy ſoul becomes reaſon itſelf, and what it is in itſelf it demonſtrates to others; but with reſpect to itſelf it is ſight; for it is now collected into one, and perfectly quiet, not only ſo far as pertains to externals, but with reference to itſelf, and is all things within itſelf.

Hence then it truly appears that all things derive their being from contemplation, and are contemplations, as well the things which truly exiſt as the things produced from them, viz. ſpectacles formed from the ſpeculations of true

beings, and every where preſenting themſelves either to the energies of ſenſe, of knowledge, or of opinion. Actions too are directed to knowledge as their end, and deſire affects knowledge. Generations likewiſe, originating from ſpeculation into form, and there ending, ceaſe to fabricate any other contemplative ſpecimen, and every where particular imitations of efficient cauſes, produce ſpectacles and ſpecies. Generated ſubſtances likewiſe, imitations as it were of beings, declare that efficient cauſes behold as their end, neither productions nor actions, but the effect itſelf, for this only purpoſe, that it may be a ſpectacle to beholders.

But even our very thoughts deſire to

behold, and prior to theſe the ſenſes, whoſe end is knowledge: and again before theſe nature herſelf, poſſeſſing in herſelf reaſon and a ſpectacle, generates beſides another reaſon. So that from hence it appears, that ſince thoſe natures which are the firſt of all abide in contemplation, all the reſt muſt neceſſarily deſire contemplation as their end, ſince that which is the principle of all things is propoſed as their end. Hence when animals generate, the ſeminal reaſons within ſtimulate to production, the whole of which is the energy of contemplation, and a ſtimulous deſiring to fabricate many ſpecies and various ſpectacles, and to fill all things with reaſons, and, as it were, to be fixed in perpetual intuition; for to produce any particular nature, is

to produce a certain form, and this is no other than entirely to fill all things with contemplation; beſides, deviations from rectitude, which ariſe as well in generated natures as in actions themſelves, appear to be nothing elſe than certain wanderings of the eyes of contemplative natures from the objects of their perception: and a bad artificer appears ſimilar to him who produces deformed forms. Laſtly, lovers themſelves are particularly converſant in beholding, and eagerly ruſh to the contemplation of form: and thus much concerning nature, and the mode of her operation.

But when contemplation raiſes itſelf from nature to ſoul, and from this to intellect, the contemplations always becoming more domeſtic and familiar, and

united with the contemplating individuals, (and the objects of knowledge in the worthy ſoul ſubſiſt in the ſame ſubject, as haſtening to intellect itſelf) certainly in intellect, they are now both one, not by a certain acquired familiarity, as in the moſt excellent ſoul, but they become one through eſſence, and becauſe in intellect eſſence is the ſame with intellection. For there it cannot be any longer ſaid that *this* is one thing and *that* another; for if this was admitted, there muſt be ſome other nature in which eſſence and intellection are one. It is requiſite therefore that in intellect both ſhould be truly one; and this is no other than a vital contemplation, and not as a theorem ſubſiſting in another; for that which is vital in

In Intellect that we know is the same as that we know

another is not vital from itſelf. If therefore any theorem and intellectual conception lives, it is requiſite that it ſhould be a life neither vegetable nor ſenſitive, nor of any other animaſtic nature; for intellections are in a certain reſpect different, but one is a vegetable, another a ſenſitive, and laſtly, another an animaſtic intellection. But, you will aſk, why they are intellections? I anſwer, becauſe they are reaſons: and every life is a certain intellection; but one is more obſcure than another, in the ſame manner as one life is more debile than another. But that which is more illuſtrious and ſtrong is the firſt life, and an intellect one, and the firſt. The firſt intellection therefore is the firſt life, and the ſecond life is the ſecond intellection, and the

laſt life is the laſt intellection; all life therefore of this kind is alſo intellection. Some however may perhaps ſay, that there are differences of life, but will not acknowledge that theſe are nothing more than diverſities of intellections, but will aſſert that ſome lives are indeed intellections, but others not, becauſe they by no means inquire in what the nature of life conſiſts. And here we may obſerve how our diſcourſe again evinces that all things are contemplations; for ſince every thing lives in a more perfect or imperfect degree, and all life is intellection, it neceſſarily follows that every thing is a certain contemplation; for contemplation and intellection are one. If therefore the moſt true life is a life according to intelli-

gence, and this is the ſame with the moſt true intelligence, hence the moſt true intelligence lives; and a theory and theorem of this kind are vital, and life, and theſe two are together one. After what manner then is this one many? Perhaps becauſe it does not contemplate that which is one; for when it ſpeculates *the one*, it does not behold it as one; for if this was the caſe it would not become intellect: but beginning indeed as one, it does not abide as it began, but latently becomes many, as if heavy with the multitude with which it is pregnant, and evolves itſelf as willing to poſſeſs all things, though it would be much better for it to be deſtitute of ſuch a wiſh; for thus it becomes the ſecond, in the ſame manner as a circle

unfolding itſelf from its impartible ſubſiſtence becomes both a figure and a plane, and a circumference, center, and lines, ſome of which are ſituated upwards, and others downwards; its principal indeed being of a ſuperior, but the reſt of an inferior nature. It is requiſite therefore that intellect, which is as well all things as of all, ſhould conſiſt of parts, each of which is every and all; for unleſs this is admitted, it will poſſeſs ſome part which is not intellect, and thus it will be compoſed from non-intellectuals, and will be a certain fortuitous heap, requiring aſſiſtance from all things in order that it may become intellect. But becauſe every part of intellect is all things, it is on this account infinite; and hence when any thing in-

trinſically emanates from its nature, that which emanates ſuffers no diminution, becauſe this alſo is all things: nor yet is that diminiſhed which is the ſource of the emanation, becauſe it is not a compoſition from a multitude of parts.

And ſuch is the ſubſtance of intellect, on which account it is not the firſt of all things; but it is requiſite that there ſhould be ſomething ſuperior to intellect, (for the ſpeculation of which we have undertaken the preceding diſcourſe) and this becauſe multitude is always poſterior to the one: but intellect is number, and the principle of number is unity. Intellect likewiſe is both intellect and intelligible, and is therefore at the ſame time two; but it is requiſite to

Elements of Theo. by Proclus.

receive ſomething prior to theſe two. What then ſhall we call this ſomething? Shall we call it intellect only? But to every intellect that which is intelligible is conjoined; and unleſs it is conjoined it cannot be intellect. If therefore that which is firſt is not intellect, but flies both from intellect and intelligible, it follows that the nature which is prior to theſe two is ſuperior to intellect. But, you will ſay, what hinders it from being intelligible only? I anſwer, this, that the intelligible always ſubſiſts in conjunction with intellect. If then it is neither intellect nor intelligible, what can it be? Certainly that from which intellect, and, together with intellect, intelligible proceeds. What then is this principle, and what reſemblance can we form of him

in the phantaſy? for he will either be ſomething intelligent or non-intelligent; but if intelligent he will be intellect; and if non-intelligent he will be ignorant of himſelf, and will appear to be nothing venerable and divine. For though we ſhould ſay that he is *the good itſelf*, and the moſt ſimple of all things, we ſhall not aſſert any thing perſpicuous concerning his nature; ſince we ſhall not by this means poſſeſs an object which can be perceived by the eye of cogitation. Beſides, ſince it is *through* and *with* intellect that intelligent natures derive their knowledge of other things, by what collected intuition can we perceive a nature exalted above intellect itſelf? We anſwer, that this can only be accompliſhed by ſomething reſident in

our ſouls as much as poſſible ſimilar to the firſt; for we poſſeſs in our inmoſt receſſes ſomething of this exalted nature; or rather, there is not any thing endued with a power of participating this firſt god in which he does not abide. Indeed wherever any thing ſubſiſts capable of receiving this divine principle it participates ſomething from thence: juſt as if a voice ſhould occupy a ſolitary place, and together with this ſolitude a number of men; for then in whatever part the ear is placed the whole voice is received, and yet again not the whole. What is it then which, by applying our intellect, we receive? But perhaps it is requiſite for this purpoſe that intellect ſhould turn itſelf behind, and ſince it has a countenance on both

See Mores also of Virtue Page 96. Comment of Theocles on Verses of Pythagoras There is nothing existing, wch has not in the summit of its nature a Vestage or trace Symbol or Image of the first — and it is through these traces that all natures are conjoin with the first.

ſides, it ought ſhould leave itſelf behind, and, in order to ſurvey *the good*, be converted, leſt become intellect, comprehending all things; for intellect is the firſt life, and an energy conſiſting in a diſcurſive proceſſion through all things: in a diſcurſive energy I ſay, not conſiſting in an extended tranſition, but in a tranſit already finiſhed and full. If therefore intellect is life, and a tranſition, and poſſeſſes all things, not confuſedly but in the moſt exact manner, (for if it poſſeſſed them indiſtinctly, it would likewiſe poſſeſs them imperfectly) it is neceſſary that intellect ſhould depend on another nature, which is no longer converſant with a diſcurſive energy, but is the principle of tranſition, the ſource of life, and the origin of in-

tellect, and of all things. For the principle is not all things, but rather all things flow from the principle; while the principle itself is neither all things, nor any one particular of all things, that it may generate all things; nor is it multitude, but the principle of multitude; for that which generates is every where more simple than that which is generated. If therefore the principle of all things generates intellect, it is necessary that this principle should be more simple than intellect. But if any one thinks that *the good itself* is both one and all things, he will either be all things, according to every one of all things separately, or he will be all things collectively. But if he is all things accumulated together, he will be posterior to

The one is superior to Intellect because Intellect is multitude — & all multitude is posterior to the one.

The highest God is seen afar off as it were obscurely, and if you approach nearer it is beheld still more obscurely, lastly it takes away the ability of perceiving other things, he is therefore truly incomprehensible — and inaccessible light — and is profoundly compared to the Sun, upon which the more attentively you look — the more you are to dazzle and blinded — and will only bring back with you eyes stupified

all things; for if he was prior to all things he must be something different from all things. But if all things subsist together with him he will not be the principle: it is, however, requisite that he should be the principle, and prior to all things, that all things may subsist posterior to his nature. But if he subsists according to each particular of all things, in the first place, one thing will be the same with one another throughout the universe; and in the next place, all things will subsist together, and all diversity and distinction will be destroyed: and hence it appears, that he is not any one of all things, but subsists prior to all things.

What then shall we say he is? The

power of all things, without whoſe ſubſiſtence the univerſality of things would never have had a being; nor would intellect have been, which is the firſt and univerſal life; for that which ſubſiſts above life is the cauſe of life; ſince the energy of life, which is all things, is not the firſt, but emanates from this principle as its ineffable fountain. Conceive then a fountain poſſeſſing no other principle, but imparting itſelf to all rivers, without being exhauſted by any one of them, and abiding quietly in itſelf; but the ſtreams which emanate from this fountain, before they flow in different directions, as yet abiding together, and, as it were, already knowing what rivulets will proceed from their defluxions: or conceive the life of a mighty tree,

propagating itſelf through the whole tree, the principle at the ſame time remaining without being divided through the whole, but, as it were, eſtabliſhed in the root: this then will afford an univerſal and abundant life to the tree, but will abide itſelf, without multiplication, and ſubſiſting as the principle of multitude. Nor is it wonderful that this ſhould be the caſe, though at the ſame time it is wonderful how the multitude of life ſhould originate from non-multitude; and how it is impoſſible that multitude ſhould exiſt, unleſs prior to multitude, ſomething which is not multitude ſubſiſted; for the principle cannot be divided into the whole of things, ſince if it was divided the univerſe would immediately be deſtroyed: nor would it

ever have been generated, if the principle had not abided in himſelf, and was not different from the univerſality of things. Hence reduction every where takes place into that which is one, and in every thing there is a certain one, to which that thing is reduced; and this univerſe is reduced into a *one* prior to itſelf, but which is not ſimply *the one*, and this is the caſe till we arrive at that which is perfectly and ſimply one; and this is no longer referred to another. Indeed, by receiving *the one* of a tree, *the one* of ſoul, and *the one* of the univerſe, we ſhall every where receive that which is moſt powerful and venerable; but if we receive *the one* of true beings, that is, the principle, fountain, and power of reality, ſhall we be diffident

Thus all bodies proceed from one first body or that of the universe. all souls from one first soul or the animating principle of the world. all Intellects from one first intellect and all these several ones which are so many wholes are rooted and concentred in the ineffable principles of all things

and ſuſpect that it is nothing? Indeed it is no one of the natures of which it is the principle; and it is ſuch that nothing can be predicated of its nature, neither being, nor eſſence, nor life; for it is incomprehenſibly raiſed above theſe. But if by taking away being you are able to apprehend this ineffable nature, you will immediately be filled with aſtoniſhment, and directing yourſelf towards him, and purſuing his latent retreats till you repoſe in his ſolitary deity, you will now behold him by a viſion perfectly ſimple and one; and having beheld him, you may conceive his magnitude from the beings which ſubſiſt poſterior to his nature, and through its all-producing power. Beſides, conſider after this manner, ſince intellect is a certain ſight, and

is ſight perceiving, hence it is a power which has already proceeded into energy; it contains therefore ſomething correſponding to matter, and ſomething analogous to form, as likewiſe viſion according to energy. But by the matter of intellect, I mean that which ſubſiſts among intelligibles; ſince viſion according to energy poſſeſſes a twofold property: it was one therefore prior to its viſion; and hence one is made two, and two one. To ſenſible viſion, indeed, plenitude, from a ſenſible object, and its own perfection, as it were, arrives; but it is *the good* which fills the viſion of intellect; for if intellect were *the one itſelf*, what occaſion would there be for it either to ſee or energize in any reſpect? For other natures indeed poſſeſs an energy

about, and for the ſake of, *the good*, but *the good itſelf* is not indigent of any thing; and on this account nothing is preſent with it beſides itſelf. When therefore you pronounce *the good*, you ſhould be careful to add nothing elſe in your intellectual conceptions; for if you add any thing, you immediately declare that the nature to which you have added ſomething is deſtitute; and on this account you ought not to conjoin intelligence, leſt you ſhould by this means add ſomething foreign, and produce two things, *intellect* and *the good*. Intellect indeed requires the ſubſiſtence of *the good*, but the good is by no means indigent of intellect; and on this account intellect, purſuing *the good*, poſſeſſes the form of good, and is perfected by *the good*; while

How ſhall we praiſe a nature that is above being. for whatever we add to ſuch a nature derogates from his tranſcendent excellence.

the form reſident in intellect proceeds from *the good*, and is endued with a boniform nature. But from the veſtigie of *the good*, which is beheld in intellect, we ought to eſtimate the dignity of its exemplar, conſidering its reality from the impreſſed veſtigie of its nature, which intellect contains. It is from this impreſſion therefore that intellect ſees and poſſeſſes; and on this account there is always a deſire in intellect, and intellect is perpetually deſiring and purſuing. But *the good itſelf* is without deſire; for what ſhould it deſire? Nor does it purſue any thing; for it has never deſired: it is not therefore intellect, for in this there is deſire, and an intimate conjunction with its own all-various form. Intellect indeed is beautiful, and the moſt

beautiful of all things, being ſituated in a pure light and in a pure ſplendor, and comprehending in itſelf the nature of beings, of which indeed this our beautiful material world is but the ſhadow and image; but intellect, that true intelligible world, is ſituated in univerſal ſplendor, living in itſelf a bleſſed life, and containing nothing unintelligible, nothing dark, nothing without meaſure; which divine world whoever perceives, will be immediately aſtoniſhed, if, as is requiſite, he profoundly and intimately merges himſelf into its inmoſt receſſes, and becomes one, with its all-beauteous nature. And as he who diligently ſurveys the heavens, and contemplates the ſplendor of the ſtars, ſhould immediately think upon and

ſearch after their artificer, ſo it is requiſite that he who beholds and admires the intelligible world, ſhould diligently inquire after its author, inveſtigating who he is, where he reſides, and how he produced ſuch an offspring as intellect, a ſon beautiful and pure, and full of his ineffable fire. But his father is neither intellect nor a ſon, but ſuperior to both; for intellect has a poſterior ſubſiſtence, and is indigent of nouriſhment and intelligence, being ſituated the next in order to that nature which is ſuperior to every kind of want. Intellect, however, poſſeſſes true plenitude and intelligence, becauſe it poſſeſſes the firſt of all things; but that which is prior to intellect, is neither indigent nor poſſeſſes; for if this were the caſe, it would not be *the good itſelf.*

PLOTINUS

ON THE

DESCENT OF THE SOUL.

PLOTINUS

ON THE

DESCENT OF THE SOUL.

OFTEN when by an intellectual energy I am roused from body, and converted to myself, and being separated from externals, retire into the depths of my essence, I then perceive an admirable beauty, and am then vehemently confident that I am of a more excellent condition than that of a life merely animal and terrene. For then especially I energize according to the best life, and

become the ſame with a nature truly divine: being eſtabliſhed in this nature, I arrive at that tranſcendent energy by which I am elevated beyond every other intelligible, and fix myſelf in this ſublime eminence, as in a divinely ineffable harbour of repoſe. But after this bleſſed abiding in a divine nature, falling from intellect into the diſcurſive energy of reaſon, I am led to doubt how formerly and at preſent my ſoul became intimately connected with a corporeal nature; ſince in this deific ſtate ſhe appears ſuch as ſhe is in herſelf, although inveſted with the dark and ever-flowing nature of body. Heraclius therefore exhorts us to inquire into the cauſe of this deſcent, and places certain neceſſary viciſſitudes from contraries into contra-

ries; he likewiſe ſpeaks of a path upwards and downwards, and reſts in this progreſſive mutation; obſcurely intimating, that to labour perpetually in the ſame purſuit, produces intolerable wearineſs and fatigue. But in the courſe of this inquiry, he ſeems to ſpeak from ſimilitudes, and by theſe means neglects to unfold his meaning clearly to our view; ſo that it is perhaps requiſite to inquire of him again, in the ſame manner as he by inquiry obtained the object of his purſuit. Beſides, Empedocles, when he aſſerts that there is a law appointing offending ſouls to fall into theſe inferior regions, and when he ſays of himſelf,

I fled from deity and heav'nly light,
To ſerve mad diſcord in the realms of night.

he delivers as much on this ſubject in ænigmas, as is uſual with Pythagoras and his followers, as well in this, as in other inquiries of difficult inveſtigation: to which we may add, that Empedocles becomes more obſcure through his poetical compoſition. But the divine Plato next preſents himſelf to our view, who has ſpoken many and beautiful things concerning the ſoul, and its deſcent into body, ſo that we may reaſonably hope to receive from him ſome clear information in this arduous affair. What then does this philoſopher aſſert? Indeed he does not appear to be every where uniform in his aſſertions, and on this account his meaning is not obvious to all. But in the firſt place he every where deſpiſes the whole of a ſenſible nature,

and condemns the commerce of the ſoul with body; aſſerting that it is confined in bonds, and buried in body as in a ſepulchre. He likewiſe venerates the ſaying which is delivered in the arcana of ſacred myſteries, that the ſoul is placed here as in a priſon, ſecured by a guard. And again, a den with Plato, as a cavern according to Empedocles, ſignifies, as it appears to me, this viſible univerſe; where a ſolution from theſe bonds, and an aſcent from this den, is, ſays he, in the ſoul a progreſſion to an intelligible nature. Beſides in the Phædrus he conſiders the defluxion of the wings to be the cauſe of the ſoul's deſcent to this terreſtrial abode; where certain periods bring the ſoul again to earth, after it has aſcended to its priſtine

and proper abode. Likewiſe divine judgements, lots, fortunes, and neceſſities, cauſe other ſouls to deſcend; and in all theſe he appears to blame the connection of the ſoul with body, as derogating from the true perfection of its nature. But in the Timæus, diſcourſing concerning the univerſe, he both praiſes the world and calls it a bleſſed god, and aſſerts that ſoul was given to the univerſe by its beneficent artificer, that it might poſſeſs an intellectual condition; ſince it is requiſite that the world ſhould be intellectual, which cannot take place without the intervention of ſoul. Hence ſoul was infuſed into the univerſe by the demiurgus on this account; and each of our ſouls was in a ſimilar manner inſerted into body, as neceſſary to the perfection

of the whole. For it is requiſite that as many and ſimilar genera of animals ſhould be contained in the ſenſible, as abide in the intelligible world.

So that while we inquire of Plato concerning our ſoul, we are neceſſarily led to inveſtigate how ſoul itſelf became connected with body, and what we ought to aſſert concerning the nature of the world, in which ſoul is placed for the ſake of diſpenſing corporeal affairs, whether ſpontaneouſly, or by compulſion, or according to ſome other peculiar mode of ſubſiſtence. It is likewiſe neceſſary to inquire concerning the fabricator of theſe, whether he acts in a manner perfectly right, or after the manner of our ſouls, which perhaps are

neceſſarily obliged, while governing inferior bodies, to penetrate profoundly into their eſſence, in order to vanquiſh their reſiſting and ever-flowing condition. For every particular body is of a diſſipated nature, and tends to a certain place as its appointed habitation: but in the univerſe all things are naturally eſtabliſhed in their proper receptacle, as in an immutable bound. Beſides, our bodies require an abundant and anxious attention, as ſubject to a variety of foreign events, as expoſed to a multitude of wants, and as requiring perpetual defence from the extreme difficulty and danger to which they are neceſſarily expoſed. But the body of the world as perfect and ſelf-ſufficient, and ſuffering nothing contrary to its nature, is go-

verned by the moſt eaſy attention and command, and perpetually abides in a condition agreeable to the will of its informing ſoul; ſo that it is neither excited by deſire, nor agitated by any perturbations; for nothing departs from its nature, nor again accedes to it, as if indigent of neceſſary good. Hence Plato aſſerts, that our ſouls, when they are perfectly eſtabliſhed with the ſoul of the world, will be likewiſe perfect, reign on high, and govern the univerſe itſelf: for when they are neither abſent from the world, nor yet profoundly merge themſelves in body, nor are any longer of a partial condition, then becoming, as it were, the intimate aſſociates of the mundane ſoul, they govern the univerſe without labour and fatigue. So that it is not

evil for the ſoul to confer, in a certain reſpect, being, and a bleſſed ſtate of exiſtence on the body; for all providential attention to inferior natures, does not prevent the provident inſpector from perſevering in the beſt condition of being; ſince the providence of the univerſe is twofold, viz. univerſal and particular; and the univerſal indeed adorns all things with an authority free from anxiety, and with a government truly royal and ſupreme; but the particular providence operating as it were with a manual artifice, fills the artificer with the condition of his work, and contaminates him with its peculiar imbecility and diſſipated ſubſiſtence. But the divine ſoul always governing the univerſe in ſuch a manner as to tranſcend an in-

ferior nature, and at the ſame time tranſmit an ultimate progreſſion of power into the receſſes of that which is ſubordinate, prevents any one from accuſing divinity, as if it had placed the univerſal ſoul in that which is abject and baſe. Add too, that ſoul will never be deprived of this natural enjoyment, ſince it poſſeſſed it from eternity, and will continue to poſſeſs it through all the following periods of exiſtence; and this not as an employment contrary to its nature, ſince it is ever preſent to the world, without any temporal origin of its providential exertions. Plato likewiſe aſſerts that the ſouls of the ſtars are affected in the ſame manner to their ſubject bodies as the ſoul of the world; for he conſiders the motions of their bodies

as ſubſiſting according to the circulations of ſoul, and at the ſame time he preſerves to them a felicity accommodated to their natures: for there are two particulars through which he condemns the commerce of the ſoul with body; one, becauſe it becomes a hindrance to its intellectual energies, and the other becauſe it fills the ſoul with a deſtructive rout of pleaſures, deſires, and griefs; neither of which inconveniences can happen to the ſoul which has not yet merged herſelf in the dark penetralia of body, nor paſſed into a private and limited condition. But, on the contrary, a ſoul of this exalted kind becomes connected with a body which is neither expoſed to indigence nor ſuffers any defect; on which account it neither irritates the

ſoul with deſire, nor diſturbs it with fear; for nothing dreadful relative to ſuch a body can ever become the object of anxiety to the ſoul; nor can any employment verging to inferior concerns draw it down from a more exalted and bleſſed contemplation; but it is perpetually elevated to divine natures, and at the ſame time governs the univerſe with a power free from all anxiety and fatigue.

But our buſineſs at preſent is to ſpeak of the human ſoul, which is reported to ſuffer every evil through its connection with body, and to lead a miſerable life, oppreſſed with ſorrows and deſires, with fears and other maladies; to which the body is a bond and a ſepulchre, and the

world a cavern and a den. And theſe different opinions of the ſoul are not diſcordant, ſince deſcent is not the ſame in each; for, in the firſt place, ſince every intellect abides in the region of intelligence, total and univerſal, which we denominate the intelligible world; and ſince intellectual powers, and particular intellects reſide there comprehended in divine union, (for there is not one intellect alone, but one and many) it is likewiſe requiſite that there ſhould be one general, and many particular ſouls; and that from one there ſhould be many, diſtinguiſhed by peculiar diverſities, like ſpecies from a certain genus, ſome of which are more excellent, and others of an inferior nature; and ſome of which are more intellectual,

and others ſubſiſting with a diminution of intellectual energy: for there in intellect one intellect ſubſiſts as comprehending all others in capacity, like a mighty animal, while at the ſame time other intellects have each a diſtinct ſubſiſtence in energy; each comprehending the other in capacity. Juſt as if a city ſhould be animated, comprehending in itſelf other animated beings; for in this caſe the ſoul of the city would be more perfect and powerful than the reſt, and yet nothing would hinder other ſouls from being of the ſame nature with this general ſoul: or as if from univerſal fire one ſhould be a vaſt and another a diminutive fire; while in the mean time all the various gradations would proceed from univerſal fire, or rather from that

which is the ſource of this general fire. But the employment of the more rational ſoul is certainly intelligence, nor yet intelligence alone, for how in this caſe would it differ from pure intellect? But excluſive of an intellectual energy aſſuming ſomething according to which it poſſeſſes its peculiar hypoſtaſis, it does not remain intellect alone. It poſſeſſes, however, a deſtined employment accommodated to its nature; and when it ſurveys things prior to itſelf it underſtands, but when it contemplates itſelf, it preſerves its peculiar eſſence; and when it verges to that which is poſterior to itſelf, it adorns, adminiſters, and rules over its fluctuating nature: for it is impoſſible that all things in the intelligible world ſhould abide in perfect inactivity;

an ability at the ſame time ſubſiſting of producing beings in continued ſucceſſion, which muſt indeed be conſequently diminiſhed in perfection, and yet at the ſame time neceſſarily exiſt, as long as that which is ſuperior to theſe continues to ſubſiſt.

It is neceſſary therefore, that particular ſouls employing an intellectual appetite in a converſion to their origin, and poſſeſſing beſides this a power of governing ſubſequent natures, ſimilar to light ſuſpended on high from the ſun, and at the ſame time communicating its illuminations without envy to things poſterior to itſelf; it is requiſite, I ſay, that ſuch ſouls ſhould be preſerved from injury and moleſtation, while they abide

in the intelligible world, together with univerſal ſoul. And that, beſides this, in the celeſtial regions they ſhould govern the world, in conjunction with the mundane ſoul, like ſo many kings aſſociating with the governor of all things, and becoming his colleagues in the general adminiſtration of the world; and this without deſcending from the royal abodes, as being then in the ſame eſtabliſhment with the ſovereign king. But when they paſs from their ſituation with univerſal ſoul, ſo as to become a part, and to ſubſiſt by themſelves, as if weary of abiding with another, then each recalls itſelf to the partial concerns of its own peculiar nature. When, therefore, any particular ſoul acts in this manner for an extended period of time, flying

from the whole, and apoſtatizing from thence by a certain diſtinction and diſagreement, no longer beholding an intelligible nature, from its partial ſubſiſtence, in this caſe it becomes deſerted and ſolitary, impotent and diſtracted with cares: for it now directs its mental eye to a part, and by a ſeparation from that which is univerſal, attaches itſelf as a ſlave to one particular nature, flying from every thing elſe as if deſirous to be loſt. Hence by an intimate converſion to this partial eſſence, and being ſhaken off, as it were, from total and univerſal natures, it thus degenerates from the whole, and governs particulars with anxiety and fatigue; aſſiduouſly cultivating externals, and becoming not only preſent with body, but

profoundly entering into its dark abodes. Hence too, by ſuch a conduct the wings of the ſoul are ſaid to ſuffer a defluxion, and ſhe becomes fettered with the bonds of body, after deſerting the ſafe and innoxious habit of governing a better nature, which flouriſhes with univerſal ſoul. The ſoul therefore, falling from on high, ſuffers captivity, is loaded with fetters, and employs the energies of ſenſe; becauſe in this caſe her intellectual energy is impeded from the firſt. She is reported alſo to be buried, and to be concealed in a cave; but when ſhe converts herſelf to intelligence, ſhe then breaks her fetters and aſcends on high, receiving firſt of all from reminiſcence the ability of contemplating real beings; at the ſame time poſſeſſing ſomething

ſupereminent and ever abiding in the intelligible world. Souls therefore are neceſſarily of an amphibious nature, and alternately experience a ſuperior and inferior condition of being; ſuch as are able to enjoy a more intimate converſe with intellect abiding for a longer period in the higher world, and ſuch to whom the contrary happens, either through nature or fortune, continuing longer connected with theſe inferior concerns. And this is what Plato occultly ſignifies when he diſtributes ſouls from the ſecond Crater, and cauſes them to become parts; for then alſo, he ſays, it is neceſſary that they ſhould fall into generation, after they have thus obtained a partial ſubſiſtence. But when he ſays that ſouls were ſown by the demiurgus, we muſt

underſtand his meaning in the ſame manner as when he introduces the mundane artificer ſpeaking, and, as it were, delivering an oration to the junior gods; for whatever ſubſiſts in the common nature of the whole, this the hypotheſis generates and produces, for the purpoſe of unfolding, in ſucceſſive order, things which were thus eternally generated and had a perpetual ſubſiſtence.

The aſſertions therefore are by no means diſcordant with each other, which declare that ſouls are ſown in generation, and that they deſcend for the ſake of cauſing the perfection of the univerſe; likewiſe that they are condemned to ſuffer puniſhment, and are confined in a cave: and again that they poſſeſs a ne-

ceſſary and ſpontaneous motion; ſince neceſſity has that which is voluntary united with its nature. Nor again is the ſaying diſcordant which aſſerts that the ſoul is ſituated in evil while it is inveſted with body; nor is the flight and wanderings of Empedocles from deity, nor guilt and conſequent puniſhment, nor the reſt of Heraclitus in his flight, nor the voluntary and yet involuntary condition of deſcent, by any means repugnant to the truth; for whatever paſſes into an inferior condition does not ſpontaneouſly deſcend; at the ſame time proceeding according to its own proper motion, and becoming paſſive to inferior circumſtances of being, it is ſaid to ſuffer juſt puniſhment for its conduct; ſince thus to ſuffer and act is neceſſary from

the law of an eternal nature. But if any one ſhould aſſert that deſcending from on high becomes uſeful for ſome other purpoſe, and that on this account the deſcent is produced by divinity, ſuch a one will neither diſſent from truth, nor from himſelf; for the extremes are neceſſarily referred to the principle from which the intervening particulars proceed, however numerous the mediums may be by which they are connected. But ſince guilt is twofold, and one part ſubſiſts in the cauſe of deſcent, but the other in the commiſſion of evil in the preſent life, the ſoul ſuffers on both theſe accounts through its deſcent. But it is the mark of a leſs puniſhment to enter other bodies, and this more ſwiftly from the deciſions of a judgement deter-

mining according to the merits of the offence; and this taking place by a divine appointment is ſignified by the name of judgement. But an immoderate form of evil is conſidered as worthy of a greater puniſhment; I mean a ſubſiſtence under the government of avenging dæmons, and experiencing by this means the extremity of affliction and pain. And thus the ſoul, though of divine origin, and proceeding from the regions on high, becomes merged in the dark receptacle of body; and being naturally a poſterior god, it deſcends hither through a certain voluntary inclination, for the ſake of power, and of adorning inferior concerns. Hence, if it ſwiftly flies from hence it will ſuffer no injury from its revolt, ſince by this

means it receives a knowledge of evil, unfolds its latent powers, and exhibits a variety of operations peculiar to its nature, which by perpetually abiding in an incorporeal habit, and never proceeding into energy, would have been beſtowed in vain. Beſides, the ſoul would have been ignorant of what ſhe poſſeſſed, her powers always remaining dormant and concealed; ſince energy every where exhibits capacity, which would otherwiſe be entirely occult and obſcure, and without exiſtence, becauſe not endued with one ſubſtantial and true. But now indeed every one admires the internal powers of the ſoul through the variety of her external effects, conjecturing the dignity and excellence of the former,

from the beauty and multitude of the latter.

If therefore it is neceſſary that there ſhould not be *the one* alone, for if this was the caſe all things would be concealed in his ineffable nature, and would no longer poſſeſs any proper and diſtinguiſhing form, being ſwallowed up, as it were, in his ſolitary deity; nor would there be any multitude of beings generated from one firſt cauſe, unleſs among the number of things which receive a progreſſion from thence ſome were found eſtabliſhed in the order of ſouls. In like manner it is requiſite that there ſhould not only be ſouls, but that their effects alſo ſhould have a perſpicuous ſubſiſtence, (ſince every nature poſſeſſes an

eſſential ability of producing ſomething poſterior to itſelf, and of unfolding it into light from its occult ſubſiſtence in dormant power) and this as if from a certain indiviſible principle and ſeed, proceeding to a ſenſible extremity, while that which has a priority of ſubſiſtence always abides in its proper ſeat, but that which is conſequent is generated from an ineffable power, ſuch as belongs to ſuperior beings, and is the proper characteriſtic of their natures. But barrenneſs is perfectly remote from ſuch a power; for if it was barren, its prolific energies muſt be reſtrained through envy, which, on the contrary, ought always to be exerted in the moſt liberal progreſſion, till all things have proceeded as much as poſſible to their ultimate extre-

mity: for it is proper that a cauſe of inexhauſtible power ſhould diffuſe its beneficence through all things, and not endure to behold any thing deprived of the unenvying exuberance of its nature; for there is nothing which can prevent any being from receiving the communications of good, as far as the capacity of its nature will permit. Whether therefore the nature of matter is eternal, it is impoſſible, ſince it always ſubſiſted, that it ſhould not participate of that cauſe, which abundantly ſupplies every thing with all the good it is capable of receiving: or whether the generation of matter neceſſarily followed cauſes prior to its nature, neither in this caſe is it proper that matter, through its imbecility, ſhould be deprived of the benefits prior

to its nature; as if a perfectly beneficent cauſe withheld the liberal communication of good. That which is moſt beautiful, therefore, in the ſenſible world, is a repreſentation of that which is beſt in intelligibles, viz. the power and goodneſs eſſential to their natures. Indeed all things, as well intelligibles as ſenſibles, are connected in the moſt becoming order; the former of theſe ſubſiſting by themſelves, and the latter perpetually receiving being from the participation of intelligibles, which they endeavour to imitate as far as their flowing and unreal natures will permit.

But ſince there is a twofold nature, one intelligible and the other ſenſible, it is better indeed for the ſoul to abide in

the intelligible world, but neceſſary from its condition that it ſhould participate of a ſenſible nature: nor ought it to ſuffer any moleſtation from a conſciouſneſs that it is not the beſt of beings, ſince it obtains a middle order in the univerſality of things, and poſſeſſes indeed a divine condition, but is placed in the laſt gradation of an intelligible eſſence, bordering, as it were, on the regions of ſenſe. Hence it confers ſomething of itſelf on a ſenſible nature, from which likewiſe it receives ſomething in return, unleſs, preſerving its own proper integrity, it rules over the defiling nature of ſenſe; ſince through an abundance of ſenſible deſire, it becomes profoundly merged in matter, and no longer totally abides with univerſal ſoul. Yet our

ſouls are able alternately to riſe from hence, carrying back with them an experience of what they have known and ſuffered in their fallen ſtate; from whence they will learn how bleſſed it is to abide in the intelligible world, and, by a compariſon, as it were, of contraries, will more plainly perceive the excellence of a ſuperior ſtate. For the experience of evil produces a clearer knowledge of good, eſpecially where the power of judgement is ſo imbecil, that it cannot without ſuch experience obtain the ſcience of that which is beſt. As, therefore, an intellectual diſcurſive energy is a certain deſcent to that which is laſt, and of a worſe condition, for it is not lawful that ſuch an energy ſhould proceed to a ſuperior nature, hence it is neceſſary that ener-

gizing from itſelf, without being able to abide in itſelf, it ſhould proceed by an unavoidable law of nature, as far as to ſoul: for this is its proper bound; and that which is conſequent to ſoul, becomes alſo a limit to the progreſſive energies of ſoul. So that it is natural to ſoul to deliver itſelf to inferior, and again return to ſuperior beings; and to govern corporeal natures poſterior to itſelf, and contemplate the prior and more exalted eſſences of the intelligible world. And all this is accompliſhed in our ſouls according to the circulations of time, in which a converſion takes place from ſubordinate to more exalted natures. But to the ſoul of the world it is doubtleſs proper that it ſhould never be occupied in an inferior employment; and that

without becoming paſſive to evil, it ſhould behold ſubſequent natures with the eye of divine contemplation, and, at the ſame time, always depend, as it were from beings prior to itſelf: and this twofold employment it is able to accompliſh at once, receiving from higher beings, and ſupplying ſuch as are inferior; for it is impoſſible, from its nature as ſoul, that it ſhould not touch on both theſe oppoſite extremes.

Indeed if it is proper to ſpeak clearly what appears to me to be the truth, contrary to the opinions of others, the whole of our ſoul alſo does not enter into body, but ſomething belonging to it always abides in the intelligible, and ſomething different from this in the ſenſible world:

and that which abides in the ſenſible world, if it conquers, or rather if it is vanquiſhed and diſturbed, does not permit us to perceive that which the ſupreme part of the ſoul contemplates; for that which is underſtood, then arrives at our nature, when it deſcends within the limits of ſenſible inſpection. For we do not know every thing which takes place about any particular part of the ſoul till it arrives at the whole of the ſoul; juſt as deſire, abiding in the deſiderative part of the ſoul, is then at length known by us, when, either by a certain intimate ſenſitive or cogitative power, or from the conjunction of both, we recognize its exiſtence. For every ſoul poſſeſſes ſomething which inclines downwards to body, and ſomething which tends up-

wards towards intellect: and the ſoul indeed, which is univerſal and of the univerſe, by its part which is inclined towards body, governs the whole without labour and fatigue, tranſcending that which it governs; becauſe its operations do not ſubſiſt like ours, through the diſcurſive energies of reaſon, but through intellect alone, in the ſame manner as art operates without deliberation and inquiry. Hence by her ultimate part ſhe ſupervenes and adorns the whole. But ſouls which are particular and of a part, have alſo ſomething ſupereminent; but they are too much occupied by ſenſe, and by a perception of many things happening contrary to nature, and on every ſide producing anxiety and grief: and this becauſe the object of their at-

tention and care is a part indigent and defective, and ſurrounded with a multitude of foreign concerns. It is likewiſe ſubject to a variety of affections, and is enſnared by the allurements of pleaſure; but the ſuperior part of the ſoul is never influenced by fraudulent delights, and lives a life always uniform and divine.

To APOLLO.

THEE, mighty ruler of the world, I ſing!
Of life the ſplendor, and of light the king.
Sprung from a fire ineffably divine,
The world's bright eye, and leader of the Nine.
Whoſe unmixt rays prophetic truth inſpire,
And leap exulting from an unknown fire:
Whoſe liberated power thro' matter's night
Widely pervades with purifying light:
Whoſe piercing darts malignant powers annoy,
And all immoderate lawleſs forms deſtroy;
And whoſe revolving motion is the ſign
Of ſymphony collective and divine.
But not in matter's flowing realms alone
Thy matchleſs power and ſacred light is known:
The ſupermundane realms confeſs thy might,
And intellectual gods from thee derive their light.
Thee, great Apollo, as their king they own,
And move in mental circles round thy throne.
Thee, too, each ruler of the world reveres,
Thoſe ſhining eyes that deck th' æthereal ſpheres;
And as they roll with energy divine,
Declare that dignity ſupreme is thine.

Hence when thy beams, deep merg'd in mental night,
Firſt ſhone thro' æther with unhop'd-for light,
The mundane gods, with Bacchic joy entranc'd,
Around thy orb in myſtic meaſures danc'd;
And, loſt in wonder, ſaw thy vivid ray
Strike darkneſs back, and give unbounded day.
Dæmons and heroes venerate thy nod,
Oh faireſt image of the higheſt god!
With ſouls impaſſive, whom thy mental fire
Preſerves from plunging into Hyle's mire,
Which at the bottom of life's ſtormy deep,
Polluted ſouls detains in deadly ſleep.
Hail! ſov'reign king, by mighty gods ador'd,
Parent of concord, univerſal lord.
Hear! and propitious to thy ſuppliant's prayer,
Diſperſe the ſeeds of life-conſuming care;
Diſplay the light of wiſdom unconfin'd,
And pour its radiance on my dark'ned mind.
The ſtores of intellectual wealth be mine,
Peace ever tranquil, and a life divine:
And ſoon permit me, from the guileful ties
Of matter freed, from life's dark ſea to riſe,
And leave, expanding wide the wings of mind,
Its dreadful ſounding billows far behind.
Here, from thy boſom torn, I ſorrowing ſtay,
And meditate my flight from day to day;

Indignant in the realms of night I roam,
And oft look up and gain a glimpſe of home.
As ſome poor exile on a diſtant ſhore,
With mournful eye ſurveys the country o'er,
And oft looks back, and oft recals to mind
The pleaſing coaſt and friends he left behind,
Unwilling views the cheerful light of day,
And in ideal proſpects pines away;
So grieves my ſoul while abſent and diſtreſt,
She roams an exile from her place of reſt.
Oh! haſte the period, when from body free,
This wretched captive ſhall return to thee;
Shall once more recognize her kindred ſoil,
And prove the bleſſing of her former toil;
Plac'd where no change impairs, no griefs corrode,
And ſhining 'midſt th' immortal gods a god.

29 DE 63

THE END.